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JANUARY 1957

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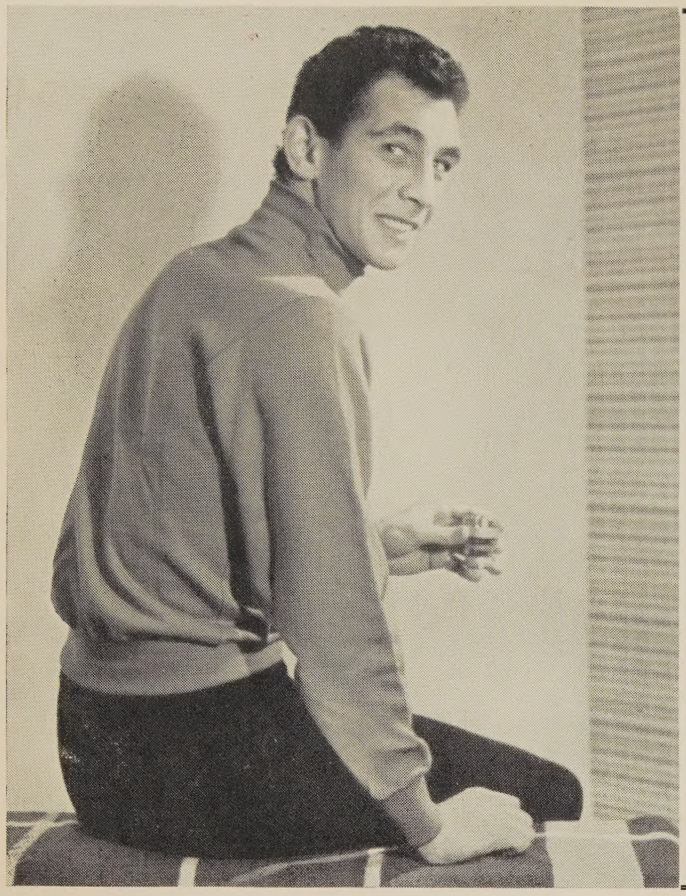

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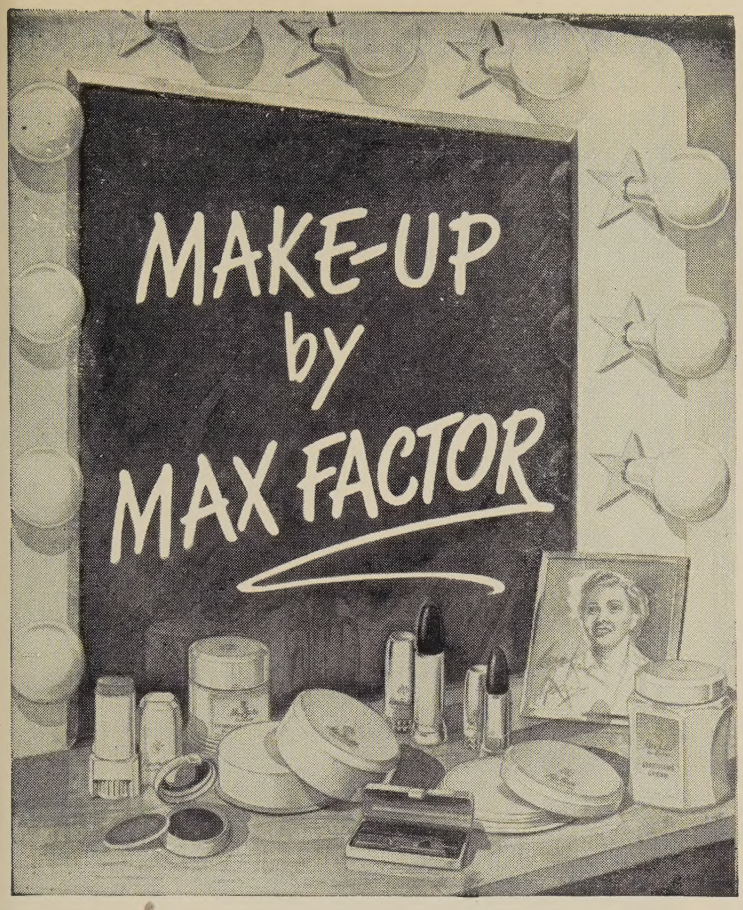

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Personality of the month

Photo: Baron

David Webster

THE unexpected and tragic death in 1946 of Lord Keynes led to the appointment of David Webster as General Administrator of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. There is little doubt that during these past ten years his has been the most powerful controlling hand in the fortunes of our national lyric theatre.

It is true that he has always interested himself in and concerned himself more with the opera activities at Covent Garden than with the ballet. Indeed there have been times when it might have been thought that, in sheer defiance of the plain facts of life, he has sought to make the opera company more important than its world-famous elder sister. However, he has managed, with a pitifully small grant from the national exchequer, to keep the finances of both companies on even keels (although perhaps in the beginning ballet's Peter suffered too much to pay for the often profligate pleasures of opera's Paul) and to him must go a great deal of the credit for establishing the solid position Covent Garden now holds in the cultural life of the country.

This year Webster the administrator has given place to Webster the diplomat: like people in various other walks of life he has been faced with a "Russian question." Firstly he was confronted with the threatened cancellation of the Bolshoi visit. This overcome, he had to deal with the manifold difficulties the season placed squarely on his shoulders, not the least of which was persuading his somewhat reluctant guests to open the season on time.

Finally, at the conclusion of an eventful year, he had to cope with the decision on the reciprocal visit Sadler's Wells were to have paid to Moscow. Of course, this decision was not his alone: the British Council and the Government had not only their say but also the last word. Yet it was Webster who took the eventual responsibility for a decision the rights and wrongs of which will be discussed in ballet circles for many months. Possibly, in view of the difficulties that might have resulted from a Moscow trip at that particular time, those responsible for the decision let their hearts over-rule their heads. And those who regard the arts as above politics might well have considered the formal notice of cancellation to have been a little *too* formally worded. But no one could think that the time was opportune for such a visit.

January 1957 8th YEAR OF PUBLICATION Vol. 8 No. 1

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS
Assistant Editor: CLIVE A. BARNES
WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

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Keep the Channel Open

"IT is only through art," said Marie Rambert on a night when international tension seemed even more pronounced than usual, "that we can keep in touch with the rest of the world. It is the last channel left to us." As this disturbed globe gets more confused and frightened, it is even more apparent that what Rambert said is true. We may become muddled by the differing opinions expressed in the newspapers and by politicians; we may blow hot and cold in our regard for certain countries according to the latest headline; but we should not, if we have any depth of honesty in us, allow any of this to affect our judgment and appreciation of the art of any country.

The arts which do not rely on language are obviously those most suited to keeping this channel open—the graphic arts, music and the dance. In this not inconsiderable world of the dance everybody has a part to play—whether involved professionally or as members of the audience—in keeping a clear mind uncluttered by any political beliefs.

This may not be easy to do, but if this channel is to be kept open it is absolutely essential. It most certainly does not mean that we should become ostrich-like, bury our heads in the sand and live in a dream state peopled only by dancing fantasies. We must be realistic, yet at the same time hang on like grim death to the firm belief that art knows no frontiers.

In the uneasy peace since the last war, prophetically called "the long week-end" by a famous thriller writer, no art has played a more important rôle in promoting international friendship than ballet. Through various French companies we have come to understand France; through the interchange of British and American companies both countries have reached a new level of understanding; the Russian companies which have come to Western Europe have brought with them not only revealing manifestations of the eminence of their ballet, but also of their humanity and dedication. Without the visits of groups from India, Bali, China, Japan or Spain, what, one wonders, would the average British person know of these peoples so different in temperament from us? A vast new world has been opened up, and all through the often despised art of the dance. All this seems to point to the fact that the channel of art should be the very last to be closed.

It is no use pretending that the future looks clear and rosy; but as long as there remains some common meeting-ground which every nation recognises, there is always hope. It might not be too fantastic to assert that the art of dance can become an important force in helping to forge a brave new world from the wreck of the old.

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ALICIA MARKOVA

AFTER a year which has seen Markova dance on both sides of the Atlantic, she returns to central London at Christmas to dance as the Spirit of the Lake in Keith Lester's ballet in the children's play, *Where the Rainbow Ends*. During this year she has also made a large number of television appearances, dancing Pavlova's rôles in a commemorative programme, appearing several times in *Sunday Night at Ten* and also taking part in other television programmes with no connection with the dance. She was to have danced *The Dying Swan* at the Royal Command Variety performance, but the show was cancelled. She is shown in this picture in the solo created for her by Ana Ricarda, *Bolero 1830*, which she danced at the Pavlova Commemoration midnight matinée last January.

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José Greco returns to London

WITH his company, José Greco opens a season at the Festival Hall on Christmas Eve—his third appearance in London. In 1950 he danced with a small group at Covent Garden on a Sunday afternoon as part of a lecture-demonstration organised by the Royal Academy of Dancing. In the following year, as part of the Festival of Britain, Greco appeared with his full company for a season at the Sadler's Wells Theatre.

Although half Italian and mainly brought up in America, Greco has become a Spanish dancer who it is hard to believe is not one hundred per cent Spanish. As a child he would watch and imitate dancers in the cafés in Seville and even when his family went to live on the other side of the Atlantic, the love of Spain always remained with him. It was his sister, though, who took dancing lessons; he just tagged along to look after her. Finally the teacher, impressed by his musical sense, persuaded his family that he should take up dancing seriously. Actually at the time he thought he would become a painter, so he took lessons at the Leonardo da Vinci School in New York; at the same time he kept on with his dancing. In 1938 he met Argentinita; she was impressed by him and said that she hoped he would dance with her one day. Two years later she was as good as her word and Greco partnered her in Ballet Español in a tour that took them right across America.

In 1945 Argentinita died in New York and Greco was of the party which escorted her body back to Madrid. When Pilar Lopez, Argentinita's sister, revived Ballet Español in Spain, Greco remained her partner for three years. After the success of his dancing in a film—*Manolete*—about that great matador, Greco formed his own company which made its Paris début at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées in 1948. The success he scored there was repeated all over Europe and particularly in Scandinavia. In 1951 the José Greco Spanish Ballet made its début in New York and so successful was it that a month's season was extended to two months, followed by five years of trans-American touring.

José Greco, both in private life and on the stage, is a handsome and forceful personality. He is much taller than most Spanish dancers and has the figure of an athlete. For a man of his size he has remarkable speed. What he learned from his first partner, Argentinita, has stood him in good stead—he is a prodigious worker and directs his company with a mixture of friendliness and authority. By imparting to each member of his company a sense of personal responsibility, he gets the results that have brought him and his company great acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic.

SPANISH LEAP: Greco in En el Cortijo, *a dance which used* zapateado *to simulate the clattering of horses' hooves. (Below) Nila Amparo, Lola de Ronda and Greco in another of their popular numbers.*
Photos: Maurice Seymour

BOLERO: *The principal dancers of Greco's present group in the number which was originally created by Argentinita to Ravel's popular* Bolero. Left to right: *Lola de Ronda, José Greco, Nila Amparo, Luis Olivares.*
Photo: Maurice Seymour

Ulanova in London

by NINA LATTA

When the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet from Moscow gave its London season at Covent Garden, Russian-born Nina Latta was appointed as Ulanova's interpreter. During the season she also became a close friend of the great Russian ballerina. Nobody outside the company had closer contact with the ballerina when she was off-stage. Here are some of Nina Latta's reminiscences of that time which reveal many sidelights on Ulanova's character.

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BALLERINA AND INTERPRETER: Galina Ulanova with Nina Latta, her interpreter and the writer of this article. Photo: Houston Rogers

The Arrival

I HAD been asked by the management of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, to be Galina Ulanova's interpreter during the Bolshoi season in London. On a grim, wet and foggy day we waited for the company. They arrived hours late. Somehow Ulanova managed to step into the vestibule of the Opera House unnoticed in spite of twenty pairs of eyes that were eagerly searching for her. It was Dame Margot Fonteyn, I believe, who first discovered her standing at the foot of the stairs listening to a woman reading out a list of names and allotting hotels. We whisked her into a taxi, her face covered by a scarf to protect her from the pursuing photographers.

Her first words to me were, "I can't go alone. I'm in a group. I must go with my group." I explained to her that we had to get away.

"My husband! My luggage!"

I promised that they would follow. The scarf came off, revealing a pale Madonna-like face, a broad forehead and a pair of clear blue eyes that looked still anxiously into mine.

"I'm your interpreter, Madame Ulanova."

There was a faint smile. "How nice! How kind!" she murmured.

When we got to her hotel, just off the Embankment, I led her into a small suite, a tired, worried little woman. Middle-aged though she is, to me she seemed to have a curious agelessness.

"Have some coffee," I suggested. "You must be cold and tired. I'm going now to fetch your husband."

"No coffee, thank you, but *please* find the others."

Coffee from Moscow

Back at Covent Garden, by a miracle and with the help of Sergeant Martin, the Chief Commissionaire, I not only found her husband, Vadim Rindin, and two of her group, but all the luggage as well. Amazingly enough I managed to keep my promise to her and was back in a quarter of an hour. It was only when her husband came into their suite that her face relaxed for the first time.

The coffee I had ordered stood untouched. "I do not want it, thank you. I have brought some with me from Moscow." Finally only a small thermos was produced. Her husband, however, more persuasive than I, induced her to try the hotel coffee. Then, in that case, she said, I must try the Moscow coffee. Her eyes watched me carefully as I drank it. It was good —as good as the hotel coffee?

"Delicious!" I pronounced. And it was!

Suddenly she said, "I never thought the countryside here was so beautiful. I so much enjoyed the drive from the airfield—orchards, orchards all the way." (They had landed at Manston.)

After a little further conversation, I ordered dinner for them upstairs and went home. I was not entirely happy. They somehow seemed in need of comfort or of reassurance.

On the first night of their season I found them both pacing up and down the hotel room, worried and tense.

"It is terrible that you see us like this," she said, "but it always happens before I dance."

"If it didn't happen you would not dance as you do," I reassured her. Suddenly she turned to me: "You were born in Petrograd. You know I was too." She usually referred to Leningrad by its former name.

Thoughts of Home

As she talked of her home she immediately started to relax. In the days that followed she would talk a lot about Leningrad: she spoke of the city with such enormous love and affection. She told me terrible things about the siege. "One time we had been away dancing somewhere else. We were evacuated. When we came back we were walking down the street laughing. Suddenly we were quiet. It seemed sacrilege to make a noise, almost like laughing in church, when we thought of all that had happened." She had tears in her eyes as she told me this.

Another time, it was before she danced, I brought her some illustrated papers. She was like a child when she looked at all the pictures. "What's written here?" she would demand. She listened to everything very seriously. She was quite overcome by the general reception and the warmth of her reception, both after her performances and in the Press.

Unlike most ballerinas she liked to talk before performances. The trance-state, when she was getting into her rôles, took place in the dressing-room just before the performance. She was always nervous before she danced, and I noticed, when she was lying down, that she was shaking. After her first three performances in London she was very tired. Many ballerinas seem to gain an added vivacity immediately after a performance, and find that they can go on to parties or talk late into the night, then they sleep late the next morning. With Ulanova it is quite the opposite, as all vitality was drained out of her after a performance and all she really wanted was to get back to her hotel. Early the next morning she would be up and completely refreshed, relaxed and wanting to talk.

Self-discipline

But however tired, her sense of severe self-discipline never left her; she would practise for hours. One evening she seemed particularly exhausted, so I suggested she lay down for a bit. Just as she was about to do so the telephone rang. It was Chulaki, the Director of the company. After she had finished a short conversation she turned and said, "Now we have to go to the Waldorf." I protested, as it seemed absurd that a ballerina should have to go to a conference before her performance. However, she was adamant. "No, we must go." All the time she was anxious about the company and felt that she could not rest if the company were in any difficulties, or if they were working and she was not.

She was obviously unused to star treatment, and she hated to be sought out. The "star" system, with its fans and fan clubs, does not exist in Moscow. She disliked publicity because she obviously could not understand it. She found it natural that people should be interested in her dancing—she is modest but she is also a realist—but she was surprised that anyone should be interested in what she ate, what she wore, or where she went in her spare time. The constant references to her age astonished her.

"In Russia no one ever calls me the 46-year-old ballerina. Why do they do so here?" she asked me. I explained the British preoccupation with age, which finally amused her. She realised that it had nothing to do with our admiration for her artistry. She told me more than once that the British audiences were the warmest before whom she had ever danced. When I said that this seemed to be the natural reaction to her dancing, she replied, "In Moscow they also show their disapproval." At a Press conference she underlined the point about British audiences by saying that they reacted through their eyes and seemed to concentrate more deeply on the ballet than audiences which she was used to.

NEXT MONTH: Nina Latta will continue her story of Ulanova in London with: Ulanova and her husband—Twice when she was Angry—Her Childhood in Leningrad—Her Character and Approach to her Art—A Day at Hampton Court.

Are They the Same at Home?

by EVAN SENIOR

The Bolshoi Ballet season at Covent Garden gave British ballet audiences an opportunity of seeing something of the Russian company—but only something. Evan Senior, who saw in Moscow in 1954 three of the four ballets given in the London season, compares what he saw in Moscow with what he saw of the same ballets at Covent Garden.

HAREM IN MOSCOW: Act II of The Fountain of Bakhchisarai *at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, photographed by Evan Senior during a performance there.*

IN the course of a summing-up of impressions of the Bolshoi Ballet, the *Manchester Guardian* wrote: " . . . we in the West have seen nothing, in the last twenty years or so of our ballet, to equal the first and last acts of *Bakhchisarai* for sheer vitality and theatrical effectiveness. . . ."

I wonder what that writer would have written if he had had the fortune to have seen those acts, and others of Bolshoi ballets, on the stage of the Bolshoi Theatre itself?

For, all technical considerations of dancing apart—and these have been well covered elsewhere in DANCE AND DANCERS—so much of the actual theatrical as against balletic effectiveness of Soviet ballet does depend upon its staging: on settings and the placing of those settings to give dancers room for movement.

Less than Half

We must face one important fact—that we saw in London only less than half of the Bolshoi Ballet, not only in actual numbers of dancers used, but in settings.

When in Moscow in 1954 I was able to see three of the ballets given in London—*Romeo and Juliet*, *Le Lac des Cygnes* and *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*; these, therefore, are the only ones in which I can make comparisons between what I saw in Moscow and what I saw in London. I did not see *Giselle*, so I cannot discuss that here.

The important thing to remember, in spite of what has been written to the contrary, is that in London the Bolshoi dancers were working at an enormous disadvantage because of the size of the Covent Garden stage.

From edge to edge of the proscenium opening the stage of Covent Garden is 43 feet wide. The same measurement, at the Bolshoi Theatre, is 75 feet. And the Bolshoi stage has about twice the depth of that of Covent Garden.

That means—as is shown by the diagram on this page, drawn exactly to scale—that the lateral area available to the dancers on the Covent Garden stage was only about 60 per cent—a little more than half—of what they had been accustomed to at home.

It may seem at first glance a simple matter for a dancer to adjust himself—or herself—to a different stage, particularly when a new and smaller setting has been made. But as every dancer will know, it is in fact one of the most difficult things in the world.

If you have been dancing a certain rôle for a few years and you know that, at a certain point, a couple of *jetés*, for example, will bring you from one static point to that at which you must meet a partner, the movements become automatic. If on the other hand you suddenly find that because of lack of room you must make the move in only half the space, the breadth of the movement must be constricted.

Modified Performance

So although it has been suggested that if Covent Garden's stage is big enough for Fonteyn, Markova and others it should be big enough for the Bolshoi dancers, that is not the point. Both Fonteyn and Markova have danced on the even smaller stage of Sadler's Wells, which has 30 feet of proscenium width.

But if you suddenly transferred the complete large-scale Covent Garden production of *The Sleeping Beauty* on to the Sadler's Wells stage, the ballerina would immediately find herself at a disadvantage. In fact, she would probably have to modify her performance of much of the choreography.

For, strange as it may seem without demonstration, it would be easier to put Covent Garden's *Swan Lake* production on to the Sadler's Wells stage than it was to transfer the Bolshoi's *Swan Lake* to Covent Garden. As the diagram shows, Sadler's Wells' width is about 70 per cent of that of Covent Garden, a "cutting down" of only some 30 per cent; Covent Garden width is only about 60 per cent of that of the Bolshoi, a "cutting down" of some 40 per cent.

Not all scenes in the Bolshoi ballets suffered from the transfer: many, of course, are already masked-in, with no great space needed.

But when I saw the Banquet Scene and the scene on the city square in *Romeo and Juliet* at Covent Garden, with vivid memories of the Moscow production still in my mind, the reaction was "But how tiny it all looks!"

Space at the Bolshoi

The Banquet Scene, here, looked spacious enough; but in Moscow there were almost twice as many dancers on the stage, and the great breadth of stage was matched by the ease of outward movement of masses of dancers.

It was the same in the open-air scene. In the Bolshoi, with so much more space available, the effect of broad expanses of square, stairs and balustrade was immediately obvious, the dramatic impact of the sinister incitement to battle was heightened, the hushed retreat of scared crowds was given space—and time—for effect. And there was no feeling, as I had at Covent Garden, of architecture and statuary tending to crowd against one another.

This sense of "crowding in" was bad enough for me, watching from the auditorium: I tremble to think what it must have meant to the Bolshoi dancers.

When I remember the great space available in Moscow for the opening act of *Swan Lake*, with its distant castle, its trees that seemed to hold back from the stage rather than hang over it, and the room for at least twice as many dancers and "guests," that first act looked almost ridiculously small.

This was obvious throughout all four acts of the ballet, for at times some of the *corps de ballet* were even out of sight in the wings—and this with far fewer "swans" used in the second and fourth acts than was the case in Moscow.

And so often, when watching an *enchaînement*, and expecting automatically that it would follow what I knew it to have been in Moscow, I found my heart in my mouth with the sudden fear that the dancer would find himself—or herself—finishing up in the Covent Garden

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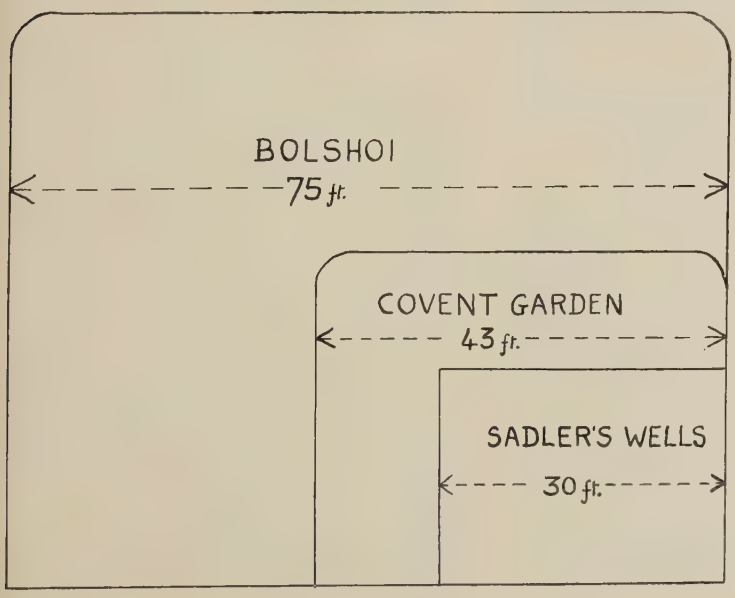

SIZES COMPARED: This diagram, drawn to scale, shows the comparative sizes of the stage openings of the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow and of Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells in London, with the actual measurements. It emphasises the great size of the Bolshoi stage available for ballet production.

What I Did Not Like About the Bolshoi

by ANTON DOLIN

The Artistic Director of London's Festival Ballet, Anton Dolin, who was the first notable Russian-trained British male dancer and a star of the Diaghilev Ballet, compares the dancers of that company and today's English dancers with those seen during the season of the BOLSHOI BALLET at Covent Garden.

EVER since 1909 when Serge Diaghilev first presented his magnificent company of dancers to the dazzled audiences of Western Europe, the words "Russian Ballet" have had magic. Diaghilev's dancers, with hardly any exceptions, had all been trained at the Imperial Ballet School in St. Petersburg, which had been founded by the Empress Elizabeth in 1745.

Until the Revolution in 1917, St. Petersburg was the capital of Russia, and the Bolshoi Ballet Company of Moscow, which had been founded in 1811, was considered a very secondary and rather provincial troupe.

André Levinson, the great Russian critic who died in 1935, writing in 1930 of the Bolshoi Ballet Company in the first decade of the present century, said: "The Moscow ballet was indeed directed by M. Gorsky, a rebellious pupil of Petipa, in a style differing from the haughty formalism and discreet elegance that prevailed at the Maryinsky Theatre; there the primitive fury of the man of the Steppes found full vent; the action was heightened by pathos, often to an extravagant degree; an unrestrained picturesqueness permeated the scenes and costumes of the famous Korovine; nevertheless, talent abounded."

The Soviet Ballet should be very grateful to the aristocrat Diaghilev, for it was he and his artists who invested the words "Russian Ballet" with their magic, their spellbinding quality. Magic, it seems, dies hard, for the words "Russian Ballet" still have the power to numb the judgment, and befuddle the critical faculty not only of the younger generation who knew not Diaghilev, but of people who really should know better.

Belief in what they do

The adulation which has been offered to the Bolshoi Ballet Company is out of all proportion to their merit. They are a good company; the *corps de ballet* works as a unit, they move lightly, cover space easily, jump well, but are for the main part badly turned-in, and *pirouette* indifferently. If one can overlook broken wrists and dropped elbows, their arms are soft and used with great fluidity, but they are certainly not classic. Their greatest virtue—and indeed their greatest help with an audience—is their very obvious belief in what they are doing; they are not apathetic; they have not been watching Giselle die three nights and one matinée a week for years. No, you, the audience, and they the villagers, are together seeing the tragedy played out for the very first time. They have enormous energy, and their vitality is infectious. But, alas, elegance, graciousness and dignity of carriage cannot be numbered among their virtues. And what is the classic ballet without them?

The male dancers of the Bolshoi Ballet are physically a fine, upstanding lot. Times change and the male Russian dancer of today seems to be chosen for his bulk rather than his talents. As character dancers they are superb, but as dancers in the traditional manner, they make only a very average showing. I saw nobody execute a double *tour en l'air* from, and to, a perfect fifth position. Their *pirouettes* are neither numerous nor brilliant. They jump well, and they jump high, but their stance in the air could be improved. And do any of them jump as high as Stanislas Idzikowsky did? I have not seen any member of the company exhibit the really impeccable classic technique of the young Dane, Erik Bruhn. Have any of the male dancers as noble a bearing and ease of technique as the two Russians, Igor Youskevitch or André Eglevsky? Did any of them dance better, or show in any sense how a Prince should behave as well as Michael Somes of our own Sadler's Wells Ballet? Certainly not in the six performances I saw did I observe the impeccable technique of Danish Toni Lander and our English John Gilpin in Festival Ballet's *Etudes*.

Where, oh where, apart from Galina Ulanova, was to be seen the artistry of Markova and Fonteyn?

Brawn they have in plenty, these Russians, but nobility, style and the aristocracy of bearing which one associates with the classic cavalier, are non-existent.

Refinements lacking

In the days of the Imperial Russian Ballet, elegance, style and nobility were not only demanded of the male dancer, but were taken for granted by the cultured, highly educated audience. It is probable that the refinements which I have enumerated, and which I find so woefully lacking in the Bolshoi Ballet personnel would not be appreciated by the very different audience for whom they perform in Moscow today. Possibly the difference in the type of audience has necessitated the scaling down of the whole level of ballet presentation in Russia.

I have seen several performances of three of the four ballets presented by the Bolshoi in London. And reading the criticisms of the performances, I have come to the conclusion that it is *Rock and Roll. Rock* the foundations of English Ballet, *Roll* our dancers in the dust.

Soviet writers on the Bolshoi Ballet proclaim that their masterpiece is *Romeo and Juliet*. Let me state frankly that it is old-fashioned, superbly produced and mimed in the style of Irving, Beerbohm Tree and Drury Lane spectacle of 50 years ago. I must admit I never saw Irving or Tree, but I did see, in my very early days, the Drury Lane and Lyceum spectacles. While *Romeo and Juliet* is a great spectacle containing movement and colour, it is not, in my opinion, ballet. As Juliet, Madame Ulanova mimes wonderfully, and dances beautifully the strictly limited choreography provided for her by the choreographer, Mr. Lavrovsky. The overhead acrobatic lifts are in themselves quite beautiful but they are, in my opinion, out of period in a production which purports to present Renaissance drama. They were as well and more sensationally executed, and not at all lacking in taste, when performed in the 'twenties by Natova and Myrio at the London Palladium, or by Horam and Myrtil at the Casino de Paris during the heyday of Mistinguette. To my Western eyes today they appear *démodé* when used in the classic ballet.

Gorsky, no Ivanov

I had the honour of being invited to the dress rehearsal of *Swan Lake* and I paid to see two performances of this ballet. I saw Ulanova's television performance of Act II of *Swan Lake* from which, alas, she cut the famous variation; but her dancing of the *adagio* reminded me of Karsavina and Spessiva.

The choreography of the Bolshoi version of *Swan Lake* is attributed to M. Gorsky—that same Gorsky referred to in the quotation from André Levinson at the beginning of this article. We must have lost all sense of proportion, all taste and all judgment if we can imagine for one moment that this arrangement is to be compared with the choreography of Petipa-Ivanov which we have known for 40 years, and which with its clear lyrical simplicity is indisputably a choreographic masterpiece. After all, it has stood the sternest of *all* tests—time! Surely we cannot compare it to the Sadler's Wells superb production of *Swan Lake*, of which, as the Artistic Director of Festival Ballet, I admit to being envious.

Can we compare either of the dancers we saw in the dual Odette-Odile rôle with Margot Fonteyn? No, not if we are honest. I liked the high flying swans of the first act. It took me back to my early youth when I saw the same effect in a pantomime in Kennington. The cardboard swans swam serenely on the lake during the opening of the second act, and were in their turn replaced by the beautifully drilled Bolshoi *corps de ballet* who executed the simple choreography so well that it fooled people into thinking that it was better than it was. They used their arms so beautifully that it made one sorry they had not been given something better to do.

I have seen the same effect achieved by a *corps de ballet* of 64 swans at the Radio City Music Hall in New York. The Bolshoi only ran to 32 swans, but then, of course, they complained that the stage was too small. It was not, of course, too small for the Diaghilev Ballet with which danced Karsavina, Spessiva, Danilova, Markova. And Anna Pavlova, who presented ballets very, very similar to those being presented by the Bolshoi today, was only too happy to appear for her London seasons on that "so small" stage. Luckily for us, the Sadler's Wells, which has been acclaimed as the greatest ballet company in the world, does not appear to be incommoded by the dimensions of the stage of the Royal Opera House.

Kondratov, as Prince Siegfried, danced well and partnered excellently. It is to be hoped that all the hysteria provoked by the Bolshoi Ballet during the last few weeks has not really eclipsed the memory of the really great dancers, past and present, who have served their art honestly within the confines of the Royal Opera House.

Adam uncut

In my opinion the ballet of Western Europe has but two things to learn from the Bolshoi Ballet's production of *Swan Lake*—the superb precision and unity of the *corps de ballet* and the particularly beautifully danced *Mazurka* and character dances in the third act.

I did not see the performance of *The Fountain of Backhchisarai* but I did sit through two acts of its dress rehearsal, during which I saw what appeared to me to be the most tasteless of harem scenes.

On two occasions I had the joy of seeing Galina Ulanova dance *Giselle*. Happily the Bolshoi production, particularly in the first act, was substantially the same version which we in England have known, and loved, for so long. As the whole of Adam's score is used, the ballet took longer to play than our own productions. The score, to which I have produced the ballet on numerous occasions, and with Alicia Markova danced it over half the world, is that used by Diaghilev, when on June 18, 1910, he presented Karsavina and Nijinsky in *Giselle* at the Paris Opéra. When in 1926 the Paris Opéra revived the Ballet for Spessiva,

BLACK SWAN: *Timofeyeva, as Odile, and Fadeyechev as Prince Siegfried in the third act of the Bolshoi* Le Lac des Cygnes. *The photograph, taken during a performance, shows one of the many lifts which are a feature of Gorsky's arrangement of this* pas de deux.

MAZURKA: *The end of the* Mazurka *in the ballroom scene from* Le Lac des Cygnes. *This and the other character dances from this act are referred to by Dolin as having been "particularly beautifully danced."* *Photos: Brian Windsor*

with Monsieur Aveline as her Albrecht, the same score was used again. I first danced to it in 1932 when, at the Savoy Theatre, London, I had the honour of partnering Olga Spessiva. The same score was used again, though greatly cut.

The supreme achievement

The first act of the Bolshoi Ballet's production of *Giselle* delighted me, for it contained many lovely passages which I had never seen before, and on the first act alone I heartily endorse the verdict of the critic who claimed that it is "the supreme achievement of the Soviet Bolshoi Ballet and Galina Ulanova." I found the second act disappointing. Ulanova's supported *adagio* is luscious and awe-inspiring to watch, and the lifts, once their acrobatic apex has been reached, are quite lovely, even though they are completely out of period. But to lift a "Wili"—a disembodied spirit—is to lift entirely effortlessly, and however fine a partner Nicolai Fadeyechev is, he looked as though he were lifting a good 124lb. However, this mattered less than it might have done had Ulanova's much publicised ethereality been in evidence. But it was not: she was all too human, and for this reason, her interpretation cannot be compared with that of our own first and great English dancer, Alicia Markova.

The end of the second act is one of the few passages that differ radically from the original ending. After all the excitement to which we have been submitted by the visit of the Bolshoi Ballet, is it not amusingly ironic that their "supreme achievement" should be said to be the 115 years old classic *Giselle* which they imported from Western Europe after its original production at the Paris Opéra in 1841? I agree that *Giselle* is the best ballet they have offered us, for having seen two performances each of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Swan Lake* and watched the rehearsal of the first two acts of *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, *Giselle*, by comparison, seems quite modern. The beauty of its ground patterns and the sparkling variety of its steps underline as nothing else could the choreographic poorness of the other ballets.

I have always believed that ballet should be a synthesis of the arts of dancing—music, painting and drama. And remembering the bursting cornocopia which Diaghilev brought out of Russia, I had hoped that the Bolshoi Ballet Company would have something different and perhaps new to offer us. Apart from our old friends Tchaikovsky and Adam and the Prokofiev score for *Romeo and Juliet*, which we already knew, they have brought us the utterly commonplace music of Boris Asafiev. Are there no Russian painters working for the theatre now? Have they no one to place alongside our own Oliver Messel, James Bailey and John Piper?

We have seen the Soviet Bolshoi Ballet from Moscow.

Have we not been blinded to the fact that we have not seen the Russian ballet from the Maryinsky Theatre that was once in Leningrad?

The heritage of Leningrad

It was from the Maryinsky Theatre that the great dancers came and from whom we, in England, gained our precious heritage. It was the great school attached to the Maryinsky Theatre which cultivated the elegance, the graciousness of manner, which was the hallmark of the great dancers of the first two decades of the present century. In that school they strove incessantly to perfect the geometry which is the austere purity of the classic dance. The individual talent of the students was noted, tended, and finally blossomed into a Pavlova, Karsavina, Trefilova, Lopokova, Spessiva, Danilova, who have been the inspiration of our own great English dancers, Markova and Fonteyn.

Galina Ulanova is the ballerina of the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet, but it is stated quite clearly by the Soviet Ballet book itself that she only became a permanent member of the Company in 1944. Prior to that, she was the ballerina of the Kirov State Opera House in Leningrad, which was the old Maryinsky Theatre, and to which she graduated from the Theatre School in 1928.

Remembering that "in the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is king," it is not difficult to understand why Ulanova, in her dated setting, is so predominantly the great dance artist of the Bolshoi Ballet Company. Having been trained by a Russian teacher, Serafine Astafieva, and begun my career with the Diaghilev company, I have always had a weakness for Russian Ballet, and maybe I have not always looked at our great English achievement with an unprejudiced eye. I expected great things of the Bolshoi Ballet Company, but now that I have seen them, I rejoice that we, in this country, have in so short a time been able to build up something which is by no means inconsiderable. I wish publicly to congratulate Dame Ninette de Valois and all her collaborators—Markova and myself among them—upon an achievement of which they need never feel ashamed.

Let us be supremely happy that we have seen the greatness of Ulanova, but, above all, let us be grateful and tremendously proud that we shall soon see again our own great British dancers—Alicia Markova, Margot Fonteyn, Michael Somes and John Gilpin.

AN INVITATION: Several notable figures in the dance world have been invited to reply to Anton Dolin's controversial article. The best letters by DANCE AND DANCERS readers on this subject will also be published in the February issue, provided they reach the Editor by December 30, 1956. Letters from overseas must be received by January 30 for publication in the March issue.

Divertissement in Croydon

Two opinions—by Clive Barnes and David Hunt—of the concert performances given by the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet at the Davis Theatre, Croydon, on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1 and 2.

from Clive Barnes

AFTER nearly a month of Soviet ballet at Covent Garden we were given, as an unexpected bonus, three nights of Soviet dancing at the Davis Theatre, Croydon.

The distinction between the two is important, as the Russians bring an almost totally different approach to the *divertissement* programme—in which, like the French, they specialise—from the high seriousness with which they regard ballet.

These programmes have in their making an element of circus-evoking showmanship that one would search for in vain in the Soviet ballet theatre proper. The short season at Croydon could only be regarded as a series of "party-pieces" by some of the best dancers in the world. Yet curiously enough it provided an equally valuable opportunity to study certain aspects of Soviet dancing and choreography different from those given us by the Covent Garden season. Here was the Soviet school with no trimmings.

The programme opened with the Polonaise and Cracovienne from Glinka's opera *Ivan Susanin*. Choreographer Rastislav Zacharov had already shown in *The Fountain of Backhchisarai* his consummate skill in arranging these national dances, and this present example was enhanced by the bare stage which concentrated the attention on the sweep and swirl of its patterns.

At first glance these dances seem much more vigorously composed than the national dances we have in our own ballet, and to an extent this is probably a fair impression. Zacharov has based his choreography on floor patterns as intricate as those used by Balanchine in *Ballet Imperial*, and this is greatly to its advantage. Yet over and above this is the conviction with which the dancers perform. They bring a sort of ritualistic joy and pride to the movements. Every step is made significant and dramatic.

Classical Excerpts

There followed the first of the two classical excerpts to be shown, the Rose Adagio from *The Sleeping Beauty*, with choreography by Asaf Messerer. Quite obviously this ballet has undergone the same "humanising" process as *Swan Lake*. In place of our (i.e. Petipa's) very *Grand Adagio* for *prima ballerina assoluta* in full panoply there has been substituted a Birthday Dance for a young Princess. Seen out of context, and naturally placed by our imagination in the setting of our own production, it is as disappointing as a nearly familiar symphony played on a tin-whistle. Personally I doubt whether its charm could in any circumstances measure up to the solemn pomp of the music, yet possibly seen as part of the whole ballet its dramatic validity would make it acceptable.

Aurora was danced by Rimma Karelskaya, who did not seem as much at home here as in *Swan Lake*. At the first performance there was a certain technical unsureness (particularly in supported *pirouettes*), and even when this had been overcome her dancing still lacked the ultimate quality of inevitability we might have expected from a Bolshoi Aurora.

The version of the *Casse Noisette pas de deux* by Vasily Vainonen which the company presented certainly differed choreographically from any of the many versions current in the West, but unlike the Rose Adagio, this was not a difference in style. Nina Chistova as the Sugar Plum Fairy failed to live up to the tender promise of her performance as the Friend in *Romeo and Juliet*. There was an angularity about her dancing which detracted from its musical phrasing. Her partner, Boris Khokhlov, was as brashly virile as ever. His dancing has supreme *panache*, an eagerness to please and an adolescent joyousness.

Apart from these purely classical excerpts there were various *spécialités de la maison*, character dances, and one short complete ballet, the *Walpurgisnacht* scene from *Faust*.

Sensational Partnering

The speciality items were varied and often sensational. Two *pas de deux* by Messerer showed the possibilities opened to choreographers by the incredible level to which Soviet ballet has raised the art of partnering.

The Gluck *Melody* proved startlingly beautiful. It would be easy to say, echoing the classic condemnation of 19th-century ballet decadence, that the male dancer has been reduced to a "mere *porteur*"; and yet this form of double-work in fact gives the male the predominating rôle in the partnership. He does not so much partner as guide and direct.

In this present *pas de deux* the girl floated in her partner's arms like a scarf in the wind. The man, all solicitude and tender passion, swept her aloft. The final moment of the dance, with him carrying her across the stage transfixed in a triumphant gesture of perfect love, reminded me of those unforgettable images of human devotion found in Balanchine's *Serenade*. It was danced with tranquil devotion by Marina Kondratieva and the reticent and noble Nicolai Fadeyechev.

The other Messerer *pas de deux*, danced to Rachmaninov's *Spring Water*, was light and pastoral in mood, successfully evoking the rhapsodic rusticity of *Daphnis and Chloe*. The choreography was pulsing with life and youth, and its athletic demands were easily met by Ludmila Bogomolova and S. Vlasov. Once again one was made aware of the wonderful resources possessed by this company (previously Bogomolova had danced little but the *Giselle pas de deux* and Vlasov—who was in England previously with a student party—had taken a very minor part in the proceedings at Covent Garden) and the manner in which their young soloists spontaneously communicate their own love of dancing.

Toys and a Swan

Another *pas de deux* in something of the same athletic *genre* was the Moszkowski *Waltz*, danced by Struchkova and Lapauri. This, with choreography by Vainonen, was familiar from the London appearances of these dancers two years ago. Once again it is a dance of sprung-steel vitality. There is a wholeheartedness about its vulgarity that subdues and captivates. With its wild throws, leaps and somersaults it has the gusto of the music-hall, the skill of acrobatics and the dedication of true art.

The only comedy number in the whole programme was Vainonen's *The Toys of Viatka*. This *pas de trois* had the unenviable job of following Ulanova's *Dying Swan*, but showed something, unrevealed by the rest of the visit despite the incidental humours of *Romeo and Juliet*, of Soviet ballet humour. Simple and naive (what would they make of *A Wedding Bouquet*?) this dance of three wooden dolls had the kind of gauche charm of the comedy dances presented by our various Spanish visitors. It was expertly danced by A. Poppova, V. Vasiliev and A. Kramerasky. One can well imagine that this company would be a riot in a ballet like *La Boutique Fantasque*.

The solos included a *Gavotte* by Vainonen to music by Lully. This was an 18th-century pastiche danced on points, with a sure sense of style and period, by Lesma Chadarein. Of more interest was a variation, danced by Nina Timofeyeva, from Vachtang Chabukiani's ballet *Laurencia*. In a brief dance, all speed and lightness, with ecstatic *jetés* and tremulously held *attitudes*, this young Leningrad dancer impressed me more than she had by her complete *Swan Lake*. Here she was magnificent.

Another dancer who came into his own during this recital was Georgy Farmanyants, who during all the Covent Garden season had been dancing at something less than his best. Dancing the celebrated solo from Zacharov's ballet *Taras Bulba*, with which he had his greatest triumph when he first toured Britain a few years ago, he bounded through the air with the breath-taking ease we all remembered. More "Olympic" bounding was performed by Sh. Yagudin (who should surely now be in Melbourne) in Messerer's *Dance of the Backshir*.

And what is one to say of the other solo Ulanova's *Dying Swan*? Here was a dance that has become a legend, given by a dancer who has become a legend, and in a bare two minutes one had to disassociate that legend from reality. I found her immensely moving—the womanly swan-like grace, the weaving, fluttering arms, the never-underlined pathos. Some found the abrupt collapse at the end inartistic. At first sight I was somewhat nonplussed, but seeing it later the heroism that was implied by this sudden final weakening seemed a nobler end than the more customary plaintive death agonies.

Wise Omission

By now we all know that the Russians excel in national dances, and the selection on view in this programme were, for the most part, typical of their best. Apart from a perky Moldavian dance for L. Trembovelskaya, M. Kamaletdinov and N. Simachev, they were all danced by Yadviga Sangovitch, Susanna Zvyagina, Sergei Koren and Y. Sekh, the company's principal character dancers.

On the first night—but later wisely omitted—two Spanish-style dances were included, but if these are best forgotten it was another of the national dances that was perhaps the best single item on the programme. This was the *Georgian Dance* choreographed by Koren, and danced by Zvyagina and Koren himself.

The dance told a slight story: a man is waiting for a girl, she comes, they dance and then she goes away leaving him solitary. The dance itself was as restrained and poetic as the story, with the most intricate and exquisite footwork. The dancers showed marvellous poise and carriage, and danced with absolute sympathy. All-in-all this was a tiny gem, a collector's item that by itself would have made the visit to Croydon worth while.

The final item in the programme was the *Walpurgisnacht* ballet choreographed by the company's principal choreographer, Leonid Lavrovsky. It was a fast and furious gallimaufry of astonished nymphs and eager satyrs, and I found the whole thing vastly entertaining. Certainly this kind of ballet has dated, yet it was perfectly in accord with the music and danced with such conviction as to disarm criticism. Lavrovsky's choreography was solidly craftsmanlike. The mass movements, with their simple, bold strokes, irresistably recalled Fokine. The orgy in *Scheherazade* must once have been like this.

Parts of the ballet had been given before in England by Struchkova and Lapauri, and these were once again the vigorous principals, although Lapauri's solo was given to the

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New drama in the Spanish dance

by PETER WILLIAMS

Luisillo's Spanish Dance Theatre, **which recently gave a three-week London season at the Princes Theatre, brought a new dramatic approach to the Spanish dance, while retaining the national idiom and feeling.**

VILLAGERS IN TOWN: Maria Rosario and Luisillo, as villagers in Zaragoza, in the number Gigantes y Cabezudos.
Photo: Hugh Doran

THE first Spanish dance company to appear in London after the war was that headed by Carmen Amaya. With her family—brothers, sisters, aunts, cousins and in-laws—she came to the Princes Theatre, where, with a lot of stamping, shouting, *palmas* and *pitos* she conquered a quite considerable corner of the British dance public. The public responded with many an "*olé*" and often showed its approval by throwing headgear on to the stage. Since those days, that Anglo-Hispanophile corner has extended to such an extent that London is now the capital where Iberian dance is most appreciated and understood. Strange it is that this grey unemotional city should respond so enthusiastically to the art of a country so diametrically opposite in temperature and temperament. But the truth remains that it is now possible for two Spanish companies to play at the same time within knifing distance of Seven Dials.

Not quite all the members of Carmen Amaya's company were her blood relations. Two came from outside the Amaya tribe—Teresa and Luisillo—and one sensed the difference immediately. The Amayas were spontaneous, whether to the benefit or detriment of the show depending on the up-to-the-minute harmony or discord within the family circle. It was all great fun of course, but not so good if you had paid for your seats and could only go once in a season. Sometimes there would be cooking going on in the wings or Carmen might take exception to her grandfather's new mackintosh, which he had just bought and insisted on wearing day and night, or her brothers were quarrelling with their respective wives.

Rather remote from all these family squabbles were Teresa and Luisillo. Together they gave an immaculately rehearsed cabaret act—like a pair of fighting pigeons who loved, hated and loved in turn. She lustrous and beautiful; he with the slender and elegant figure of a Giacommetti sculpture. Luisillo had the speed of a cracked whip and turned like a top propelled by one. He had the tragic face of a character in an El Greco painting which could light up in a most endearing smile. In certain numbers he had an impish charm.

It is obviously uncomfortable to live at close quarters with even the best regulated family, even more so with a family so volatile as the Amayas, so Teresa and Luisillo left to form their own group. This was principally built around their own act and the most successful numbers were still the ones similar to those they had given with the Amaya company—Lecuona's *Malagueña*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capricho Español* and the bull-fighting *El Relicario* and Luisillo's *Farruca* solo from *The Three-Cornered Hat*. Other dancers there were of varying merit, but without these two the group would not have amounted to much.

Two years ago Teresa and Luisillo parted company—professionally and domestically as well, for they had been man and wife. It is always sad when stage partnerships of this kind break up, specially when the art of both protagonists is so dovetailed as to make a perfect whole. Teresa married again, but what would Luisillo do? Would he find another partner like Teresa, or what? The answer was to be found in the recent season given by his Spanish Dance Theatre at the Princes Theatre, the same theatre in which he first captivated London.

The season which opened on October 31 showed that Luisillo has developed along quite another path. Gone is the spectacular cabaret approach to the Spanish dance; in its place is something quieter, conceived with a deeper intelligence and with a remarkable sense of theatre.

Not that it opened in a very promising way with Turina's *Sinfonia Sevillana*. This proved to be a far too long abstract work which had some nice grouping and a certain amount of choreographic invention, but was rather spoiled by pairs of male dancers progressing across the backcloth without seeming to get anywhere in particular.

Any despondency which might have been felt was soon dispelled by *Gitanos de la Alpujarra*. These songs of Granada given in dance form were well realised and Clavé designed an excellent back-cloth which with great simplicity evokes the right atmosphere. Some of the dances are accompanied by the tapping of sticks on the floor. It is in this number that Luisillo makes his first appearance. His *zapateado* is beautifully precise and his turns are as good as ever. In subsequent numbers I rather missed any sign of the elevation which used to be so remarkable, though possibly it was not required in anything that he gave in this programme. Teresa Amaya also starred in this item, a beautiful girl who, at the moment, is too young to have that great authority so essential to flamenco dancing at its highest. She has a bad habit of poking her head forward and many of her movements are so *staccato* that one gets the impression that she is not entirely conscious of their meaning.

A *Polo* for the singer Maria Vivo and three boys was also arranged with imagination. She has a light voice of considerable charm, in addition to which she is a very beautiful girl. Sometimes the rhythm was beaten out by the boys flicking chair-seats with their finger nails. But by far the most original number in the first half of the programme was the ballet about a blind man who regains his sight.

EL CIEGO (The Blind Man)

First given at the Chicago Opera House in October, 1955. Choreography by Luisillo. Music by J. Turina. Dance story by Luis Pérez Dávila. Costumes by Alfredo and Barredo.

The Blind Man	LUISILLO
The Woman	MARIA ROSARIO
The Girl	CARMEN ARACENA
Her Companion ..	ANTONIO CANO
Another Girl ..	GLORIA GOMA
A Man ..	RUBEN RODRIGUEZ
Shadow of Destiny	HERNANDO MONROY
The Voice of Destiny	MIGUEL CARMONA

A BLIND man finds a woman who guides his steps and gives him an interest in life. Together they make a symbolic net and ask God to give him sight. The miracle is granted, but with sight the man loses the peace which darkness had given him. Temptations beset him and twice separate him from the woman. Finally, she leaves him, taking with her the net. Finding himself alone, the man, in desperation asks God to take his sight away. He finds himself blind again and alone for ever.

OPENING with the solitary figure of the blind man, and to the accompaniment of a guitar, Luisillo holds the stage as a man living in his own dark world. The woman who befriends him, Maria Rosario, shows great tenderness in her attempts to help him. The transition to full sight is admirably conveyed with lighting and with the voice of destiny excellently declaimed by Miguel Carmona. With sight, the piano takes up the theme for a few bars and from then on, for the remainder of the "sight" period of the ballet, the only accompaniment is the clatter of heel-taps and rhythmic hand-clapping, used softly in moments of tenderness and loudly in moments of passion. The order of piano, voice and guitar is reversed as Luisillo returns to his blind state.

The sheer simplicity of Luisillo's dramatic conception is extremely moving. He has achieved a poignant drama, using the idiom of the Spanish dance without incorporating any of its folklore elements. The lack of music at certain moments is most effective, as the beat of heels and the clap of hands seem to underline the meaning to a far greater extent than music ever could.

Although one never wants to dispense with the usual regional, classical and flamenco numbers which are bound to make up any programme of this kind, if the dance of Spain is to move out of its agreeable rut, it seems that it is in the direction shown by this dance work that it should go.

Luisillo himself gave a very powerful interpretation of the blind man and Maria Rosario revealed herself to be a sensitive actress.

THE BLIND MAN: Luisillo in the opening moment of El Ciego. *It concerns the story of a blind man whose sight is restored; he returns to his original state after suffering from temptations which sight brings.*

TEMPTATIONS: (Top) Sight brings many temptations. Luisillo tries to follow Carmen Aracena who is accompanied by Antonio Cano. (Below) He succumbs to a second temptation and loses the girl who originally gave him hope. Maria Rosario, Luisillo and Gloria Gomá in a moment towards the end of El Ciego.

Photos: Roy Round

THE first half of the programme ended with lively suite of Dances from Valencia—*Ronda Huertana*—in which the main interest was a very fast dance for the boys in which they deftly manipulated tambourines, beating them on knees and elbows to the accompaniment of whistles, squeaks and castanets.

The British public has never taken too kindly to Spanish humour, any more than do the Spaniards to ours, yet *Pregones Madrilenos*, which opened the second half of the programme was one of the best *Zarzuela* (musical comedy) numbers I have seen. In a Madrid courtyard, the inhabitants and various itinerant vendors prepare for and celebrate a *verbena* (neighbourhood party). These assorted characters have tremendous gaiety and it all blows a great gust of Madrilene atmosphere through the theatre. Maria Vivo's flower song was charming, so too was the use of a barrel-organ for the nocturnal high jinks. The music of various composers was excellently arranged and the costumes and décor by R. Richards had wit.

LUNA SANGRIENTA

(Blood on the Moon)

First given at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées in November, 1952. Choreography by Luisillo. Book by Luis Pérez Dávila.

Camborio	LUISILLO
Montoya	MARIA ROSARIO
Camborios ..	.. ALTAMIRA, CANAS, CARMONA, MONROY
Montoyas ..	CANO, RODRIGUEZ
The Guide ..	.. MIGUEL CARMONA

THE Camborios and Montoyas are two gypsy families whose rivalry has gone from generation to generation. A chief of the Camborios and a Montoya girl fall in love. The Camborio comes to meet his beloved on the outskirts of a village. Surprised by the Montoyas, intoxicated with desire for revenge, the Camborio is killed. The Montoya girl curses them for their crime and the Camborios take away the body of their chief.

HERE is another work much in the same idiom as *El Ciego*, only this time there is no music at all. Again it has great simplicity and again it makes effective theatre. An added sound is the swishing of the Montoyas' whips as they ride to this sinister rendezvous. It is extraordinary how suitable these almost *musique concrète* noises are for the dance. In fact one can see great possibilities for the Spanish ballet in *musique concrète*. The unaccompanied heel-beats of the rival tribes approaching each other convey a feeling of doom.

This work was actually created three years before *El Ciego*, though never seen in London before this season, and it is obviously the turning point in Luisillo's choreographic career. The later work shows how he has developed because it is more ambitious. Both works, very complete in themselves, give high hopes for Luisillo's future in this field. Both works were also helped by most intelligent lighting, a rare quality in Spanish dance companies.

THE last three items were more conventional. In *Nocturno Flamenco*, Teresa Amaya danced a flamenco *Seguiriyas* which delighted the audience, though I could not be so enthusiastic myself. One longed for the authority of a Pilar Lopez or one of the dancers at Zambra Club in Madrid. This solo of *baile hondo* needs so much more than just performing the movements, however faultlessly executed. The strength should emanate from deep in the heart and flow through the arms and

neck. The dancer should feel the inherent majesty of a race which has loved and suffered —suffered to the extent that everything it does becomes a secret ritual. Never did I feel any of this with Teresa Amaya in her *Seguirias*.

Another regional number, this time from Zaragoza, showed two naive villagers in town for the fiesta of the Blessed Virgin of the Pilar. As these two peasants from Calatorao, Luisillo and Maria Rosario sang and danced with unaffected charm. The remainder of the company, including a priest and two acolytes, got caught up in a *jota* which also brought in *gigantes y cabezudos* (giants and big heads), traditional figures in Spanish religious festivals.

When he was a young boy in Mexico, Luisillo trained as a bull-fighter and in the final number, *Cafe Flamenco*, he delights us with some fine passes from the *faena* (the final third of the bull-fight). His figure and face take on a remarkable resemblance to the great matador Manolete. Before this, however, he has treated us to some very good flamenco dancing and it is in this respect that he has made the greatest strides since he was last in England. There has never been any doubt as to his gifts as a dancer, but previously his work smacked of the music hall. Now he has brought a very keen intelligence to everything he does and his development of flamenco is certain proof of this.

Personally I would like to see Luisillo discard more and more of the conventional numbers and concentrate on his dramatic dance talent. In this way he would be performing a very real service to the dance of Spain.

Luisillo's Spanish Dance Theatre is a good young company though, at the moment, a little immature. With time it could become a very important one which would not be a carbon copy of every other of the many groups we have seen over the past few years. Obviously we cannot go on for ever seeing the same things dished out to us with varying degrees of competence. The time has come for something different and, of the different companies we have seen, this is the one which has made the greatest bid to break away. *Olé*! Luisillo!

BLOOD ON THE MOON: (*Left*) *Luisillo, as the chief of the Camborio gypsies, approaches the village of his beloved from the rival tribe, the Montoyas. Other Camborios are Pablo Canas, Hernando Monroy and Miguel Carmona.*

(*Right*): *For a brief moment a Camborio, Luisillo, and a Montoya, Maria Rosario, are united. The revenging Montoyas are seen approaching.*

DEATH OF A CAMBORIO: The Montoyas, Antonio Cano and Ruben Rodriguez, kill the Camborio, Luisillo. *Photos: Roy Round*

A MONTOYA MOURNS: Maria Rosario curses her tribe and mourns her dead beloved as his body is carried away.

Phyllis Bedells Scrapbook

To celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Phyllis Bedells' first appearance on the stage we published in last month's DANCE AND DANCERS pictures from her scrapbook covering the years 1906 to 1912. Here are more photographs showing her in other roles, up to the time of her retirement in 1935.

EVIL SPIRIT: With Carlotta Mossetti, as a Shepherd, I played the rôle of the evil Spirit of the Vine. This ballet, The Vine, *was created specially for me at the Empire in 1915. The good spirit, the Spirit of the Mountain Stream, was played by a young girl called June Tripp, who, as June, later became famous in musical comedy. I loved playing this dramatic rôle and did a cymbal dance.*

A FAVOURITE REVIVED: In 1914 I appeared in The Dancing Master *at the Empire. This was really a revised version of* The Debutante, *the ballet which I had first seen Adeline Genée dance in 1906 and in which I made my début in 1907. The first revival was in 1910 with Genée as the Debutante, her lover was Adolf Bolm and I played the Head Pupil. In this 1914 revival, I played Genée's rôle and Espinosa was the Dancing Master.*

WARTIME MATINEE: Everything in the theatre was patriotic in these early days of the first world war. At a charity matinée at the Empire I danced a Flag Dance, *arranged by Genée's uncle Alexander Genée. This was originally given by Lydia Kyasht in* A Day in Paris in *1906.*

ICE-CREAM GIRL: My first entrance in Razzle Dazzle, *a mammoth de Courville production at Drury Lane in 1916, was in pink and white tulle and seated in a huge silver ice-cream cup carried on by flunkeys.*

COMBINED SEASONS: As Winter and Spring from a scene in Joybells, *another de Courville show at the Hippodrome in 1919. This was one of the first times that elaborate pantomime transformation scenes were used in revue.*

EARLY DANCE FILM : In 1916 I made a film, produced by Lucoque, called Fairyland. *As Queen of the Dance I had to appear in a natural woodland setting. In those days there was no such thing as trick photography and the wet grass made it difficult to dance. My shoes got soaked. This film for children was featured all over the country during the Christmas holidays.*

WITH NOVIKOFF: In 1920 I intended to give up dancing and had already been having riding lessons. However, Novikoff invited me to dance for a newly-formed Russian Society in various productions. Later we appeared at the Royal Court Theatre in recitals and we opened with this adagio from Le Lac des Cygnes, *Act II. Later we made a provincial tour, my first.*

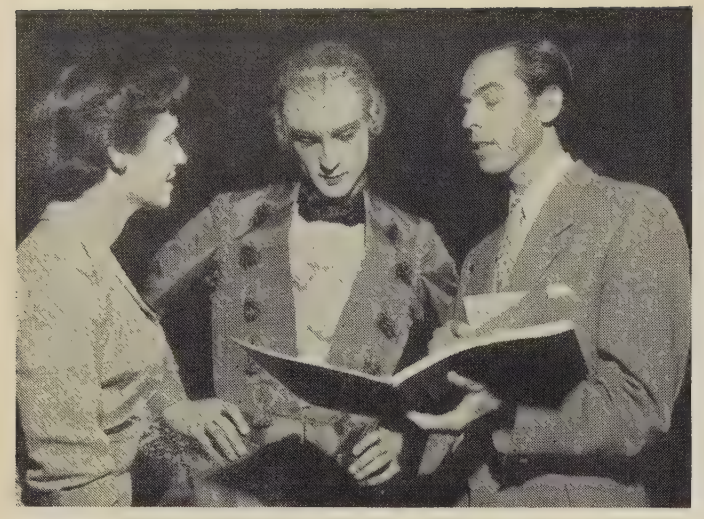
BLUE BIRD: I first danced this pas de deux *from* The Sleeping Beauty *at the Coliseum in 1927 with Anton Dolin. Previously we had toured the provinces with a* corps de ballet. *At the Coliseum we played to packed houses and cheers every night. He was the finest of partners, though there were occasions when our different temperaments caused rows.*

Later I was to dance this pas de deux *with Harold Turner at a* Dancing Times *dinner and we were to have given it on the opening night of the season given by the Association of Operatic Dancing at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen. Unfortunately several band parts were found to be missing at the orchestral rehearsal, so the dance had to be cancelled. I was so angry it upset me for days.*

GENEE'S UNCLE: Alexander Genée taught me the role of Swanilda in Coppélia *in 1929. He was then 80 years of age. I danced an excerpt from the ballet at a special matinée at the Gaiety Theatre.*

FAREWELL: One of the dances I gave at my farewell at the London Hippodrome on November 8, 1935, was this Nocturne *to Chopin music. I arranged the dance myself and was dressed in a blue and green skirt which suggested the shades of night. Every well-known British dancer of the time took part in the performance.*

THREE GENERATIONS (left): At the first and only RAD ball in 1939, Adeline Genée, myself and my daughter Jean did a number. Genée danced and did a mime scene and we introduced my daughter, who later became a dancer and Ballet Mistress of the Sadler's Wells Ballet for twelve years. I was a little girl when Genée was the ballerina at the Empire and my idol. So is the art of the dance handed on from generation to generation.



DISCUSSION: Peggy Van Praagh, Heino Hallhüber and Alan Carter in Munich.

BRITONS ABROAD: 2

Wells Ballets on Two Continents

by PEGGY VAN PRAAGH

Recently appointed Overseas Producer for the Sadler's Wells Ballet, Peggy Van Praagh has already mounted works in Germany and Canada, and this month leaves for Copenhagen where she will help to produce *The Sleeping Beauty*. Here are her impressions of her first two assignments.

The Rake in Germany

SINCE starting work last January in my new position of Overseas Producer for Sadler's Wells, I have had many extremely varied and interesting experiences. My first commission took me to Munich to produce *The Rake's Progress* for the Bavarian State Opera Ballet, and for the first time I worked in a State Theatre with all the protocol and tradition of hundreds of years. The Ballet Director, Alan Carter, and his wife Joan Harris, who is Ballet Mistress, are personal friends and old colleagues of mine. This not only lightened my task but made it a very pleasant one.

The company were enthusiastic and agreeable to work with. They are particularly good at character work and acting, the average age of the dancers being considerably higher than in our own companies, due to the State system and pensions scheme—so the *Rake* was a ballet well suited to their talents. As I do not known German, rehearsals had to be conducted mainly in mime. Luckily a few of the cast spoke English so when necessary one of them, or the Carters who have mastered German, came to my rescue as interpreters.

A pleasant surprise whilst I was there was the visit of Festival Ballet, who played for four days at the Deutsch Theatre in Munich. The Bavarian dancers attended the opening night and were very impressed with *Etudes*. The following evening, after the successful première of *Rake*, the British Consul-General gave a party for the two companies, which proved to be a most happy evening.

Rendezvous in Canada

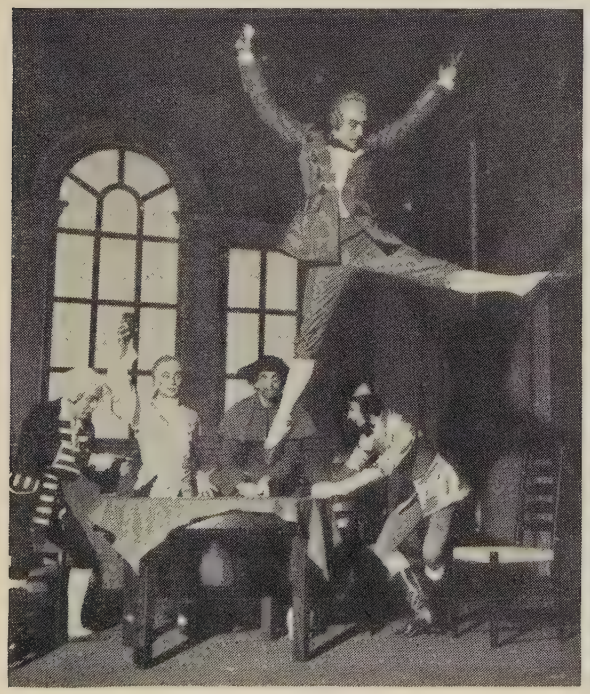
After leaving Munich I went immediately to Canada, where I spent two months in Toronto with the National Ballet of Canada. Here again I was working with old colleagues—Celia Franca, the company's director, and Betty Oliphant, the ballet mistress. However, compared with those in Munich, the conditions of work could hardly be more contrasted, as the company has as yet no national subsidy or permanent theatre to work in. The constant economic struggle for existence, which we know so well in this country, is an ever-present problem there too, in spite of the wealth of Canada. The dancers are young and very vital and much more like those in our own companies than the German dancers. The talent that Celia Franca has gathered together and is developing is very considerable and she has brought them a long way in only five years. I taught them Ashton's *Les Rendezvous*, which they learned quickly and eagerly, and danced well. I think they will perform it with sparkle. The ballet was due to have its première on tour on November 5 at Hamilton, Ontario.

My third and last commission this year is to go to Copenhagen to teach the Royal Danish Ballet the dances of *The Sleeping Beauty*, which Dame Ninette de Valois will produce for them early in the New Year. This will undoubtedly prove to be another rewarding and fascinating experience.

IN THE FUTURE we hope to publish articles by other Britons working abroad. Dulcie Howes will write about her pioneering work in South Africa, from where so many of our notable young dancers in England have come. We also hope to have illustrated articles from Mary Skeaping (in Stockholm), Celia France (in Canada) and Alan Carter (in Germany).

AGILE GAMBLER: Hallhüber, as the Rake, jumps off the gambling table in the Gambling Scene from de Valois' The Rake's Progress. *Also in the picture are Walter Matthes as the Fencing Master, Karl Roth as the Friend, Paul Wünsch as the Bravo and Hans Schönen as the Jockey.*

WHISTLER REPRODUCED: The famous drop-cloth designed by Rex Whistler for the original Sadler's Wells production of de Valois' The Rake's Progress *in* 1935, *as it has been reproduced and painted in the workshops of the Staatsoper in Munich.*
Photos: Rudolf Betz

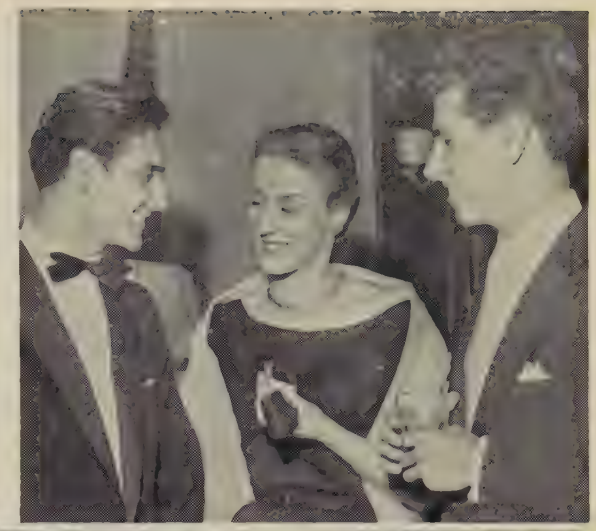


IN GERMANY: (Left) Heino Hallhüber in the Bedlam scene from Ninette de Valois' The Rake's Progress, *which Peggy Van Praagh revived for the Bavarian State Opera Ballet in Munich last spring. This was the first of Peggy Van Praagh's assignments to produce ballets in the Sadler's Wells repertoire abroad.*

Photo: Rudolf Betz

(Right) Heino Hallhüber talking to the Danish members of Festival Ballet, Toni Lander and Flemming Flindt, at a party given for the British company during their season in Munich last summer.

Photo: Felicitas



IN CANADA: (Right) Members of the Canadian National Ballet in a scene from Tudor's Dark Elegies, *which he revived for them. Peggy Van Praagh saw the production when she spent two months in Toronto. The three boys in the centre are Grant Strate, Glenn Gibson and David Adams. Celia Franca is third from left, in the rôle which she originally created for Ballet Rambert in* 1937.

(Below) David Adams, at one time a principal dancer with Metropolitan Ballet in England, with Lois Smith, rehearsing Ashton's Les Rendezvous, *which Peggy Van Praagh revived for the company.*

(Below right) Lois Smith chats with other members of the company during a rehearsal of Les Rendezvous *in Washington.* ((L. to R.) *Glenn Gibson, Peggy Van Praagh, Betty Oliphant (ballet mistress), Babs McKay (accompanist), David Adams, Celia Franca and André Dufresne (stage manager).*

Photos: Ken Bell

RETURN TO MONACO: Prince Rainier and Princess Grace Patricia of Monaco arrived at a Gala given to celebrate the Fete Nationale of the Principality of Monaco and also their return home after their honeymoon. The ballets they saw at the Théâtre de Monte-Carlo, on the following evening, are reviewed on pages 31 and 32.

UNCONVENTIONAL GAMBLERS: Colette Marchand and Veronika Mlakar, both appearing in the ballets, are seen in the sacred precincts of the Salle Privée of the Monte Carlo Casino. The first picture ever taken of dancers in costume in the gambling rooms.
Photos: Lido

curtain up!

Britten's First Ballet

THE operas of Benjamin Britten are given regularly in opera houses throughout Europe. Oddly enough, not one of them is in the current repertoire of the Covent Garden Opera Company. This will no doubt give added interest, among the general music-loving public, to *The Prince of the Pagodas*, which is to have its first night on January 1. This is the first ballet specially composed by Britten, although many of his existing works have proved attractive to choreographers in the past.

The Prince of the Pagodas, like the majority of John Cranko's ballets, will have a scenario written by the choreographer. It is based on his memories of many fairy stories, which he has adapted to his own ends. Some time ago, Cranko told me that he was looking forward to collaborating with Britten and that, although the new work will derive its form from the traditional Petipa-Tchaikovsky models, he hoped to interpret the classical form in a new way. This work will have considerable importance in the history of British ballet as the first all-British full-length work with a commissioned score.

A Chance to Star

CRANKO, like MacMillan, can usually be relied upon to give a chance to some dancer who has not hitherto been given much opportunity to show his or her mettle. In the case of *The Prince of the Pagodas*, the dancer being given his first big part is Ronald Hynd, who is to share the leading rôle with David Blair. Hynd was originally a dancer with Ballet Rambert. He joined the Sadler's Wells Ballet a few years ago, and since then he has distinguished himself in many small rôles at Covent Garden. His work has already won considerable admiration among discerning ballet-goers and this first starring rôle in a full-length ballet will give him the opportunity to consolidate and add to his reputation.

Casualty of Cancellation

ONE of the casualties of the cancelled Sadler's Wells visit to Moscow was a handsome souvenir book. This was an excellently produced and illustrated souvenir, much on the lines of the Covent Garden books which are published each year. If the thousands of copies sent to Moscow find their way back to this country, why cannot they be sold as year-books for 1956? Well, there is a snag—the text is written in Russian. Nevertheless, this silver-covered booklet should be eagerly sought by collectors of ballet souvenirs, much in the same way that Edward VIII Coronation mugs have become treasured relics of another event which never took place.

Muscovite Beer

ONE London newspaper reported that the Wells conductor, Robert Irving, was already in Moscow. In actual fact he never left, as the decision to cancel the Sadler's Wells Ballet's visit to Russia occurred just as he was about to depart.

However, one member of the company, stage carpenter Cyril Hyam, did go to Russia and, at the moment of writing, is still there. He was seeing that the scenery and costumes for the 13 ballets were safely returned to this country. His only complaint about life in Moscow was that, at the present rate of exchange, beer cost £1 for three pints.

Ballet's International Role

NOBODY can tell yet what will be the effect on the Sadler's Wells Ballet of their not going to Moscow. The company had worked very hard for many months to ensure that they were on their best form. The change of plan must have come as a great disappointment to many of them. Some of the parents were no doubt relieved, but it was the greatest ambition of many of the dancers to appear on so famous a stage.

For the sake of the company's long-term artistic development, and for the improvement of international relations, it is to be hoped sincerely that they will be allowed to make the journey to Moscow at the earliest opportunity.

Balanchines in Copenhagen

FROM Copenhagen comes the news that Tanaquil LeClercq, who entered a hospital there after having contracted polio, is out of danger. What prospect there is of her dancing in the future is at the moment uncertain. But if goodwill has anything to do with it, she should get on splendidly, for greetings arrived from all over the world wishing the ballerina, who has impressed everyone with her bravery in the face of one of the most disastrous illnesses that can overtake a dancer, a speedy recovery.

It is a hard blow that such a tragedy should have occurred just at the time when her husband, George Balanchine, had announced that his salary during the visit of New York City Ballet to Copenhagen would be given to the Royal Danish Ballet. He made this gesture at a party given by the Minister of Education in Christiansborg Castle to welcome the Danish ballet, just returned from America, and also to welcome the American visitors.

Welcome Home

THE Royal Danish Ballet had a royal welcome home after their triumphant first tour of America. They were publicly thanked by many high officials for the fine impression they had made in the, to them, new continent.

On their first appearance in their home theatre there were many "curtains"—very rare in the Royal Theatre where they are not allowed—and "touche" applause from the orchestra. The latter is when every instrument in the orchestra plays a chord together, and is only heard on special occasions in honour of great artists. King Frederick of Denmark also honoured the company, in which he takes such a personal interest, with an enormous laurel wreath.

A Fine Art or Not

A CLAIM by the Royal Academy of Dancing for exemption from payment of rates, under a clause which excuses institutions

devoted to the fine arts, led to an interesting discussion in court on the nature of ballet. Is ballet in fact a fine art? I observed, at the time, that one government department was willing to commit itself to some extent on this question: Her Majesty's Stationery Office displayed the catalogue of the Pavlova Exhibition at the London Museum in a window boldly labelled "fine and applied arts."

The Bolshoi on Celluloid

SINCE the first Russian dancers appeared in London after the last war, one of the best-known examples of Soviet choreography has been the *Moszkovski Waltz*, with its spectacular lifts and leaps which never fail to bring down the house. This was to have been included in the film made by the Bolshoi dancers during their stay here, and would have given even wider audiences an impression of the Soviet "concert style" at its most ebullient. Unfortunately Raissa Struchkova, who should have danced it with her husband Alexander Lapauri, injured her foot during the filming and the dance had to be omitted.

Several contradictory and inaccurate reports have appeared about the items in this film, which is intended for full commercial distribution. The programme actually filmed, in addition to the whole of *Giselle* with Ulanova, consists of Ulanova's dancing of *The Dying Swan*, the *Walpurgisnacht* ballet from *Faust*, the Polonaise and Cracovienne from *Ivan Susanin*, the Tartar Dance from *Fountain of Bakhchisarai* and the *pas de deux*, *Spring Water*, which proved so popular that it had to be repeated at each of the performances in Croydon.

Infrequent ballet-goers

SEVERAL times during the Bolshoi's London season I found myself sitting near Mrs. Cecil Tennent, the former de Basil ballerina Irina Baronova. Though it is now 10 years since she retired from ballet, she looked scarcely a day older than when she danced in London before the war. The last time I saw her at the ballet was at a Covent Garden matinée in 1948 when she came to see Tatiana Riabouchinska dance Giselle with the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas.

Also paying a rare visit to the ballet, on the last night of the Bolshoi's *Le Lac des Cygnes*, was Mischa Elman, the famous Russian-American violinist. Elman told me that this was the first time he had been at ballet at Covent Garden since the historic occasion, during a Diaghilev Ballet season at the Royal Opera House in 1911, when he played the violin solo for the second-act pas de deux in *Le Lac des Cygnes*, danced by Kchessinskaya and Nijinsky.

Kchessinskaya had agreed to dance the Swan Queen only if Elman, who was playing that night at the Albert Hall, was engaged to play for the *pas de deux*. Elman timed his programme so that he was able to dash to Covent Garden during his interval break, play the solo, for which he was paid a record fee, and then drive quickly back to the Albert Hall for the second half of his concert.

Ballet on Records

THERE will be disappointment in store for those who are waiting for the complete recording of *Swan Lake* by Bolshoi Ballet conductor Gennady Rozhdestvensky, of which I wrote last month. The young Russian conductor was just about to begin work when he was suddenly recalled to Moscow.

But a full-length ballet *is* on the way—a complete performance conducted by Dorati, from Mercury, of *The Sleeping Beauty*.

Stolen Thunder

IGOR MOISEYEV, Director of the Moscow Dance Company which appeared at the Empress Hall last winter, is one of the many Russian visitors who have said that these islands should form a folk-dance troupe similar to those common in Eastern Europe. Now it seems that the Russians have stolen our thunder in advance.

Two young Russian dancers, Lydia Ustinova and Ilya Kochenkov, completed a successful tour of Scotland this autumn with a final performance in Glasgow, in the course of which they danced the Highland Fling for the first time in public. They had learned the dance in three lessons from a teacher of the Celtic Ballet company and are now looking forward to introducing it to Moscow audiences.

Composer for *Ondine*

WHEN the Sadler's Wells Ballet appeared in Berlin a few years ago, a young German composer expressed great admiration for the company and for the ballets of Frederick Ashton in particular. Although he was not unknown in Germany, his name was unfamiliar to the British dancers. Now, it will become very familiar to the Sadler's Wells Ballet and their audiences everywhere, because Hans Henze is composing the music for Ashton's next full-length ballet, *Ondine*, which will have its world première at Covent Garden before the company finishes its season in June. Today, Henze is a well-known composer in Germany.

Events—Happy and Otherwise

PAMELA MAY (Mrs. Charles Gordon) recently gave birth to a daughter, Pamela Caroline. Pamela May, always one of the most popular of Wells' ballerinas, has taken over important mime rôles in the Sadler's Wells repertoire during the past few years, in addition to which she now teaches at the Sadler's Wells School. In both capacities she has added considerable stature to the Wells organisation.

THELMA LITSTER, an attractive young soloist of Ballet Rambert, has recently been in hospital suffering from concussion after a fall. It is to be hoped that after her convalescence she will shortly be back again with the company.

happy birthday to...

		Jan.
Maria Tallchief	New York City Ballet	24
Michèle Grimault	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	25
Felix Smith	Ballet Theatre	26
Betty Pope	Canadian National Ballet	26
Stanley Holden	Teaching in South Africa	27
Irène Skorik	Dancer in Paris	27
Franklin White	Sadler's Wells Ballet	27
Pauline McCullagh	Canadian National Ballet	28
Rosella Hightower	Ballet Theatre	30
Roger Fisher	Royal Winnipeg Ballet	30
Teddy Rodolphe	Dancer in Paris	30
George Skibine	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	30
		Feb.
David Shields	Sadler's Wells Ballet	1
Clare Duncan	Festival Ballet	2
Joan Stuart	Canadian National Ballet	6
Enrique Martinez	Ballet Theatre	8
Anna Cheselka	Dancer in Hollywood	9
David Scott	Festival Ballet	9
Russell Kerr	Festival Ballet	10
Patricia Dyer	Ballet Rambert	10
John Gilpin	Festival Ballet	10
Douglas Gilchrist	Festival Ballet	10
Colleen Kenney	Canadian National Ballet	12
Leslie Franzos	Ballet Theatre	13
Maryon Lane	Sadler's Wells Ballet	15
Judith Dornis	Canadian National Ballet	16
Richard Ellis	Teaching in Chicago	19
Gerd Larsen	Sadler's Wells Ballet	19
Cameron McCardell	Ballet Theatre	20
Wolfgang Brunner	Festival Ballet	22
Alexander Grant	Sadler's Wells Ballet	22
Solange Golovina	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	24
Todd Bolender	New York City Ballet	27
Yvonne Cartier	Sadler's Wells Ballet	27
Grace Greenway	Teaching	27

Dancer you will know

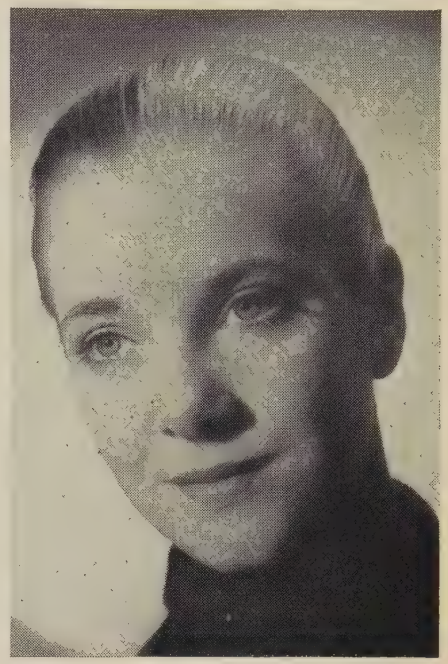


Photo: John Baker

DOREEN WELLS

BORN at Walthamstow. First dancing lessons at Bush-Davis School. Joined Sadler's Wells School in 1954, *where she remained for six weeks until joining the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. After only four weeks with the Theatre Ballet, she was taken into the* corps de ballet *of the Sadler's Wells Ballet at Covent Garden.*

Solo roles: Peasant Girl in Le Lac des Cygnes, *Act I; White Cat and one of Florestan's Sisters in* The Sleeping Beauty; *Hypnotist's Assistant in* Noctambules.

WHEN was it we first became aware of the new generation of dancers at Covent Garden? The generation of Merle Park, Shirley Graham and the others. Whenever it was it was then we first spotted Doreen Wells, for she has always been one of the particularly bright talents among her age group.

It must have been as the "leading peasant girl" in *Swan Lake* that she first attracted attention. Dancing this tiny variation she immediately revealed a genuine personality, and we began to watch out for her in the *corps de ballet*. Her dancing had a liveliness and sparkle that tended to mark her out for future honours.

So far she has not been allotted many solo rôles. One of the few she has danced with any frequency has been the White Cat in *The Sleeping Beauty*, where she achieved a sweet mixture of felinity and classicism.

Her most surprising, and difficult, assumption has been her two appearances last season in Maryon Lane's rôle of the Hypnotist's Assistant in *Noctambules*. Following Lane in one of her most successful parts was a severe test, yet Wells survived it with distinction. By giving the Assistant more humanity than does Lane, she was even able to give the rôle an individual interpretation.

But this has been only the highlight of consistently good, if unspectularly conscientious, work throughout the past two years. I fancy that in time the Wells will have cause to be very proud of their namesake.

New books from London and New York

Taglioni's successor

Fanny Cerrito, by Ivor Guest. (Phoenix House, 30*s*.)

THIS is a really remarkable book, and certainly the most important work published on the subject of dance history for many years. Though the touch of the writer is light and even vaguely reticent, its foundations rest heavily on fine scholarship and it is the work of many years' research. Fortunately, though, for her biographer, Fanny Cerrito was almost as entertaining a person off the stage as she was on it. She was born in Naples in 1817 and, surprisingly, died in Paris in 1909 in the very same month in which the Diaghilev Ballet completely revitalised Western dance.

No dance historian today (and there are precious few) equals Ivor Guest's ability to re-create the period atmosphere of the Romantic ballet. There are many surprises, and the numerous quotations taken from contemporary sources about the details of each ballet and, especially, the dancers' relations with the audiences, make excellent reading. Critics then were not versed in the technical side of dance, and their awkwardness in describing "new" steps which intrigued them reveal limitations that we are not entirely free from today. I would, however, like to know just what exactly Cerrito's movements were when on so many occasions she electrified her audience with rapid sequences of "circling bounds" or "whirling and flying motions."

There are many amusing accounts of the preparation of ballets, from the unusual and spectacular stage effects attempted to Fanny's own choreography and preference for certain steps and Perrot's successful efforts to make the dances develop directly from the action. The fascinating preliminaries which led to the splendid apotheosis of the ballet of that period—the famous *Pas de Quatre* which has now passed into legend—are given in full. There is also much detailed information on Cerrito's celebrated rivals, especially Elssler, and on such ballets as *Ondine*, *La Esmeralda*, the *Pas des Déesses*, *La Sylphide*, *Alma*, *Les Eléments* and *Les Quatre Saisons*. But to us, probably the most remarkable of all is the extraordinary number of versions of *Giselle* given so soon after its first performance, when it was undoubtedly popular, but had not achieved the inviolability of a classic, which even then, to some extent, *La Sylphide* possessed.

The illustrations are excellent and greatly enhance the book's charm, while the charming dust-jacket of Fanny in her famous *pas de l'ombre* from *Ondine* helps to make it the ballet gift-book of the year.

E. C. Mason

The best of ten years

Ballet Decade, edited by Arnold L. Haskell. (A. & C. Black, 25*s*.)

IT is to be hoped that this book is never reviewed on the radio as, spoken aloud, the title might prove very misleading. In spite of what many people believe, the years from 1946 to 1955 have not shown any noticeable decay, no more so than has always been attributed to every art through every year of its existence. Haskell assures us that it has been a "Golden Decade" and the many articles and pictures would seem to underline his statement. The volume is a selection from the first ten issues of *Ballet Annual* and can have little interest for those who possess all the volumes of this admirable year-book. But as some of the early numbers are now unobtainable this will go some way towards filling up the gaps.

All the pictures are old friends; the fact that they are friends means that we are glad to see them, and anyway they are extremely well produced. An odd sidelight on the past ten years, if this volume is any criterion as to the best of ballet's literary standards, is that by far the best articles have been written by people who are not really professional dance writers. I would swap the articles by Tamara Karsavina, Marie Rambert, Vera Volkova or Michael Ayrton for almost everything else in the book, apart from the writing of Ivor Guest, who is, in any case, professionally a chartered accountant. As far as the literature of the dance is concerned, it has, during the decade, just decayed.

P.W.

Accent on Modern Dance

The Dance in America, by Walter Terry. (Harper & Bros., $4.)

THIS exciting new book by the *New York Herald-Tribune's* dance critic deals with dance in the United States from the days of the minuet to the television spectacular and is as full of colour and interest as the writer's reviews and Sunday columns. Furthermore, it has the directness and informality that has been apparent in his well-known series of lecture-demonstrations that have been so important a feature of the YM-YWHA series these last few years.

The brief introductory section deals with the dances of antiquity and the coming of ballet, dance in colonial America and the American scene during the 1800's. Half of the balance of the book is given over to modern dance in America. Titled *The Rebellion*, this section deals at length with the pioneering innovations of Isadora Duncan, Loie Fuller, Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, Hanya Holm, Helen Tamiris, José Limon, Valerie Bettis, as well as many other dancers who have developed from these various eras.

Since Terry is one of the few critics and writers who continue to maintain an interest and awareness of both modern dance and contemporary ballet, it should not be surprising that his coverage of ballet is equally astute and unbiased. In addition, there are chapters on dance in musicals, films and television, dance education and recreation, dance notation and dance archives.

There are 32 pages of photographs, a wonderfully balanced and interesting collection that presents highlights of all the dance fields dealt with in the text. There is a tremendous amount of informative material here that might well be of considerable inspiration to students and professional dancers. Equally important is the fact that this volume can be of inestimable value in guiding the constantly growing audience for dance to greater understanding of America's liveliest art. This is unquestionably one of the best and most valuable books to be published on both ballet and modern dance in the last decade and, as such, it merits the attention of all those interested in the backgrounds of today's dance.

Arthur Todd

Another omnibus

The New Borzoi Book of Ballets, by Rosalyn Krokover. (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, $6.)

HERE are accounts of the stories, history, music, choreography, casts, sets, costumes and performances of 57 ballets in the repertoires of Ballet Theatre and New York City Ballet, Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and other companies performing in the United States.

Of primary interest to the knowledgeable follower of dance is Krokover's foreword, *Looking at Ballet*, which is a concise review of the contemporary scene, and the valuable and unique appendix where the author tabulates all the ballets ever given in the United States by these three companies as well as by the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas. These include such statistics as the dates of the world premières and first American performances, making this section a handy and invaluable guide to researchers in the field.

Of the 57 ballets described at length in this book, 22 appeared originally in the first *Borzoi Book of Ballet*, edited by Grace Robert and published in 1946. In view of this, one wonders if it might not have been wiser to have avoided duplicating the original material and, instead, to have described at greater length such works as Balanchine's *Caracole*, Robbins' *Fanfare*, *Ballade* and *The Afternoon of a Faun*, Agnes de Mille's *The Harvest According*, Ashton's *Picnic at Tintagel* and Tudor's *Offenbach in the Underworld*.

There are 32 pages of photographs, many hitherto unpublished, and all excellently reproduced. These, together with the research data provided in the appendix, constitute the chief value of the book to those already familiar with contemporary ballet. The neophyte, however, will doubtless profit considerably from the author's longer dissertations on specific ballets.

Arthur Todd

The don't-call-me-junior Wells

Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, No. 1, edited by Russell Brown. (The Sadler's Wells Foundation, 6*s*.)

The Sadler's Wells Ballet, by Hugh Fisher. (A. & C. Black, 12*s*. 6*d*.)

THE literature on the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet has been as sparse as the company's recent London seasons, but here are two books which do something to make amends. The former, which has a cover like an advertisement for a high class firm of opticians, is presumably the first of a series of booklets rather like those issued by Covent Garden for sale in the theatres in which the company plays. The lay-out is what most people would term "modern," which means that it is not often very clear—headlines in the margins, etc. The text also informs us that Pauline Barnes danced the rôle of Benno in *Swan Lake* twice, which means, if true, that the Paris Opéra is not the only establishment to use dancers *en travestie*. Since this is the first of these books devoted to the company, it was a pity that more of the distinguished works from its past repertoire were not dealt with more fully. However, Mary Clarke has written a splendid article on *The Rake's Progress*.

Much of what is left out in this book is included in the second volume, published by A. & C. Black, which is comprehensive and up to the minute even if some of the pictures are familiar through this firm's other publications.

P.W.

So You Want to Dance?

Teaching in a Great Tradition

OUR instruments for measuring the ability of a teacher are few and those that we have are not very precise. While students' examination results and the assessment of stage performances serve a useful purpose, one of our best guides is the general standard that pupils have reached in class—at least those pupils who have studied with the teacher in question for a reasonably long period.

MY first impression of Anna Lendrum's work was the extraordinary ability her younger students possessed when they performed at a children's matinée last year. Since then I have been able to watch some of these younger dancers in class, as well as the special classes which she gives to professionals.

Anna Lendrum's first contact with ballet came when, as a small girl, she was taken to see the Ballet Rambert at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, in 1931. When at that particular performance Karsavina was guest artist, it was perhaps inevitable that she should become her pupil and she remained at her school until it closed two years later.

ANNA LENDRUM: During her dancing career she had no intention of becoming a teacher; but the offer of a studio in 1953 changed her views.

As a dancer she was with Ballet Rambert, Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, Les Ballets Trois Arts and later as a dancer and choreographer with the Glyndebourne Opera company. Her teachers were Karsavina, Marie Rambert, Nicholas Legat and celebrated Russian teachers in Paris.

Today she runs a most successful school, passing on to today's dancers the Russian teaching she acquired from many famous Russian dancers of the past.

Photo: Harcourt

Early Rambert Days

She then became a pupil of Madame Rambert. Rambert has never been slow to recognise talent in a serious student and she gave her considerable encouragement. At the end of her first term there she graduated into the company, which then operated on Sundays as the Ballet Club and also gave intermittent West-End seasons. She remained with the Ballet Rambert for two years, and danced many leading rôles, such as Venus in *The Planets*, the Madonna in *Florentine Picture* and the First Guest in *Cinderella*. She counts these as two of the most important and inspiring years of her career and an invaluable experience. She not only had the guidance of Rambert's artistry, but the added privileges of performing with Markova and working with such choreographers as Ashton, Tudor and Andrée Howard. When she returned to the Mercury in 1953 to appear in two Jack Carter ballets for Ballet Workshop, *Lola Montez* and *Ouverture*, many of Rambert's charming little impulses of kindness during the early years came back to her.

During a long summer vacation when there were no classes at the Mercury Studios, a chance attendance at the Colet Gardens School of Nicholas Legat altered the course of her career again. She became from that day one of the staunchest disciples of the Russian school, and is now one of our leading teachers of the Legat system. Its complete superiority, embracing such simple logic, fluidity and beauty of line, its lightness and attack built up on dynamic rhythms, was so unshakably apparent to her that she has tried never to deviate from it in her own teaching. Later she studied with Preobrajenska, Gsovsky and Kchesinskaya and, while she still teaches the Legat system as she remembers it, I feel that it would be untrue to term her a slavish adherent to it.

"We, of the Russian school," she says, "have a rich heritage imparted to us by the teaching of exiled Russian masters: supple backs, soft feet, generous arms, high *arabesque* and strong *plié*. It is evident that the same teaching which was left behind in Russia forms the core of the Bolshoi Ballet's present greatness." She has become tired of the generalisation that they dance in such a way because they are Russian. "If only people would realise that the nationality does not count at all," she says. "It is the *school* and the way in which the teaching is imparted that is all-important."

After Legat's death in 1937 she was invited by his wife, Madame Nicolaeva-Legat, to take part in a series of lecture-demonstrations of his system at the Archives de la Danse in Paris.

Fourteen Years of Touring

At the outbreak of war she joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, but for the London seasons only, and became a permanent member of that company in September 1939. At first it seemed that the war had brought an untimely end to her ambitions. However, its first few months were spent at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, in a season given by Les Ballets Trois Arts. 1940 saw the formation of the Anglo-Polish Ballet which she joined as soloist, only to leave to join the newly formed International Ballet, with which she stayed for three years.

A period in an Anglo-Russian revue followed, and service with ENSA in a Continental tour of the same production. Then as principal in a company formed for ENSA by the late Georges Kirsta and Léon Hepner she toured Italy and Austria. On her return she worked at Glyndebourne as soloist for two seasons, and was choreographer for their Edinburgh Festival season of 1948. After this came another period with International Ballet, appearances in the television series *Ballet for Beginners*, until in 1951 she joined de Basil's Original Ballet Russe as a soloist, dancing such important rôles as the Persian Slave in *Prince Igor* and the Lilac Fairy in *Aurora's Wedding*.

Ballet's Link with Paderewski

Although her stage career was by no means extinguished, she decided to open her own school when an excellent opportunity presented itself in 1953. She had always been deeply interested in the teaching side of dance, and it would be wrong to suggest that hers was a case similar to other dancers' who only took to teaching when there were no other alternatives.

The famous Salle Erard, which had for many years been the London recital salon and studio of Paderewski, became the home of her school. It is now one of the largest and lightest ballet studios in London, but its ballet beginnings were far from easy. Her stage career had received few setbacks, and no serious ones, and although, as she puts it, she had a great deal of faith and a handful of pupils, her greatest hardships came when she started teaching. While her reputation as a teacher grew rapidly, her small collection of regular pupils took some time to increase.

In 1953 she was also invited to join the Federation of Russian Classical Ballet as a member of the Committee and as an examiner. In each successive yearly congress her students have taken part in the examinations and performances held by the Federation, and her school has also given its own special performances.

One aspect of training which Anna Lendrum believes is absolutely essential to development is that young dancers should have as many public performances as possible. She pays particular attention to the development in each pupil of his or her own unique qualities and, to this end, she likes them all to take character classes. These, she has discovered, develop and bring to life the often dormant personality.

Lendrum's Teaching Methods

Anna Lendrum does not rely on "inspiration" as do some teachers who only succeed in giving an occasional brilliant class when they feel in the mood. Her approach is one of constant thoughtfulness. With younger pupils she aims at slow but steady progress, with the perfection of each movement tackled individually. With professional dancers she is a craftsman who approaches each new problem with a searching mind and an alert and calculating eye.

She has, moreover, been appalled by many instances of the lack of foundations and the sadly inadequate schooling of so-called trained dancers and, in such cases, she finds herself silently quoting what she often heard Legat say—"He (or she) does not know his grammar."

continued on page 30

Music for the Maze

NEW RECORDS
Reviewed by DAVID HUNT

Carter: *The Minotaur*—Suite. McPhee: *Tabuh-Tabuhan*. Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra (Howard Hanson). Mercury MRL2515. 12in. 39*s*. 7½*d*.

THE New York composer Elliott Carter wrote his ballet score *The Minotaur* for Lincoln Kirstein's Ballet Society, the group that later developed into New York City Ballet. Balanchine collaborated with the composer in working out the details of the scenario, which was based on the legend of Theseus and the Minotaur, but it was John Taras who eventually provided the choreography for the ballet's first production—at the Needle Trades High School in New York City on March 26, 1947, with Tanacquil LeClercq as Ariadne and Lew Christensen as Theseus.

So far as I have been able to discover, the only important material omitted from the 27 minutes long concert suite played on this record is a March and an episode depicting Ariadne unwinding the thread that leads Theseus and his companions to safety. (Was there some subtle connection between the Needle Trades High School and the choice of subject?) The eight movements included in the suite show Carter to be an expert and inventive craftsman and might best be described as an ambitious attempt to infuse dramatic intensity into a neo-classic idiom which, in its pungent harmonies, spiky, syncopated rhythms and delicate counterpoint, would seem to owe as much to Hindemith as to Stravinsky. It is a gripping and often lyrically beautiful score, well worth investigating.

Colin McPhee's *Tabuh-Tabuhan* is a not altogether successful attempt to utilise the music of the Balinese gamelan as the basis for a Western orchestral composition. Interesting though the experiment is, I would say that Colin McPhee did far more to promote an interest in the magical sounds of the percussive orchestras of Java and Bali with his delightful book *A House in Bali*, and that Argo's recording of actual gamelan performances on ARS1006-7 makes infinitely more seductive listening that does McPhee's three-movement Toccata. However, as on the reverse, the performance and recording do everything to recommend the music.

THESEUS AND ARIADNE: Francisco Moncion and Tanaquil LeClercq in two movements from the pas de deux *in Ballet Society's production of* The Minotaur. *With Elliott Carter music, John Taras choreography and Joan Junyer designs, this work was first given in New York on March* 26, 1947. *A recording of a suite from the music is reviewed on this page.* *Photos: Larry Colwell*

Strauss, Strauss . . .

Waltztime in Vienna. Johann Strauss: *Morning Papers*; *Treasure Waltz*; *Wine, Women and Song*; *Voices of Spring*; *Viennese Bonbons*; *Enjoy your Life*; *The Blue Danube*; *Emperor Waltz*; *Artist's Life*; *Vienna Blood*; *Tales from the Vienna Woods*; *Roses from the South.* Vienna Volksoper Orchestra (Max Schönherr, Karl Hofman). Columbia 33SX1049. 12in. 33*s*. 11½*d*.

Irresistible Strauss. Josef Strauss: *Delirium Waltz.* Johann Strauss: *The Gypsy Baron* Overture; *Artist's Life*; *Emperor Waltz*; *Pizzicato Polka*; *The Blue Danube.* Philharmonia Orchestra (Herbert von Karajan). Columbia 33CX1393. 12in. 39*s*. 7½*d*.

ALTHOUGH of these two records *Waltztime in Vienna* looks the better bargain on paper, be warned that only the abbreviated, so-called "ballroom" versions of the 12 concert waltzes are played, which means that they have been docked of their evocative introductions and codas—a common enough practice, but one regarded by the true Strauss lover as an abomination bordering on sacrilege.

Nor are the performances as seductive as they might have been: the playing has the authentic Viennese brio and allure, but the respective conductors have obviously been contaminated by new-fangled "strict tempo for dancing" ideas. As if such regularity of beat would have been compatible with the swooning hesitancies and rapt abandon of 19th-century ballrooms!

On the other record Karajan succeeds extraordinarily well in making the English orchestra play as if they were the Vienna Philharmonic. Perhaps an occasional rubato sounds more applied from without than completely spontaneous; but all the magic is here nevertheless.

Josef Strauss's *Delirium* is a gem fully worthy of standing alongside the three superb examples of his elder brother's "tone-poems in waltz time" and the minor-key *tremolos* and high flute at the beginning may remind you of the Mad Scene from *Giselle*. But the glory of the record is the magnificent performance of the great *Emperor*, reproduced, like the rest, in a sumptuous, wide-range recording. Listen to it and see if you do not find the record as "irresistible" as the title, and the elegant cover design with its glittering crystal chandelier, lead one to expect.

. . . and Strauss

Strauss: *Till Eulenspiegel. Death and Transfiguration.* NBC Symphony Orchestra (Arturo Toscanini). HMV ALP1404. 12in. 39*s*. 7½*d*. *Don Juan. Death and Transfiguration.* Paris Conservatoire Orchestra (Hans Knappertsbusch). Decca LXT5239. 12in. 39*s*. 7½*d*.

IT is not surprising that in recent years the symphonic poems of Richard Strauss, with their high-powered romanticism, have been used as the basis for a far greater number of ballets than has the delightful, but comparatively untheatrical, dance music of his Viennese namesake.

Since the war Jerome Robbins and Jean Babilée have both followed Nijinsky's earlier example and endeavoured to tell the tale of Till's Merry Pranks in dancing, while Ashton has turned his attention to the pranks of a different order committed by the dashing hero of *Don Juan*. Mona Inglesby, in her *Everyman*, pressed into service *Till*, *Don Juan* and *Death and Transfiguration*, as well as throwing in for good measure the kitchen sink—or was it the *Cradle Song*?—from the *Domestic Symphony*.

Toscanini's recordings of *Till* and *Death and Transfiguration* unfortunately derive from broadcast performances, with a studio audience present, given in 1951. The reproduction is rather thin and scrawny, Toscanini sings as he conducts and the audience cough occasionally. Yet the performances are magnificent—if they had not been the record could scarcely have been issued.

Knappertsbusch's readings of *Don Juan* and *Death and Transfiguration* are extremely impressive, if not in the same class as Toscanini's *Death and Transfiguration* and *Don Juan*, the latter being available on ALP1173 in a vastly superior recording to those given to these latest issued performances of his. The new Decca, too, has the fullness and clarity of sound that Strauss's music needs, though certain aspects of the French orchestra's playing—the lack of sheen on the string tone and the rather harsh, over-bright brass—prevent the performances from being judged completely successful.

Everything considered, the Toscanini *Don Juan* and Steinberg's performances of *Till* and *Death and Transfiguration* on Capitol CTL7086 are the versions to go for.

Three French Composers

Chausson: *Poème*. Ravel: *Tzigane*. Lalo: *Symphonie Espagnole*. Arthur Grumiaux (violin), Lamoureux Orchestra (Jean Fournet). Philips ABL3126. 12in. 38*s*. 3*d*.

AT least so far as the important solo part is concerned, the performance of Chausson's haunting *Poème*—the music for Antony Tudor's *Le Jardin aux Lilas*—is about as perfect as one could reasonably hope to hear. The Belgian violinist Arthur Grumiaux takes full measure of the work's impassioned, tender melancholy and the warm, singing tone he draws from his instrument has been realistically reproduced. That the orchestral playing, though sensitively conducted, is at a relatively routine standard and is less well recorded than the soloist, hardly matters when everything is taken into account.

Much the same could be said about the performance of Ravel's curious little concert rhapsody *Tzigane*, recorded as a fill-up to the Chausson side, and of the popular *Symphonie Espagnole* of Lalo, except that both of these works require a bravura approach that would be out of place in the *Poème* and which Grumiaux effectively supplies, but without ever subordinating expressiveness to virtuosity for its own sake. The *Intermezzo* movement is omitted from the *Symphonie*, as is frequently the case in concert performances.

Credits and discredits of 1956

DANCE AND DANCERS New Year's Honours to: The management of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, for their skilful handling of the Bolshoi Ballet's visit to London, and particularly to the stage staff, who made it possible for the first night of this season to take place on the night scheduled. The Bolshoi Ballet for its supreme achievement during the London season—the production of *Giselle*—and Galina Ulanova for her unforgettable performances as Giselle and Juliet. The Sadler's Wells Ballet for its dual anniversary—10 years at Covent Garden and 25 years of existence. Marie Rambert for continuing the great work she started over a quarter of a century ago, carrying on without the financial support she so obviously deserves. Dame Margot Fonteyn for being as great an ambassadress in her profession as she is away from the stage. Alicia Markova for the way in which she upholds a great tradition and for looking younger each year. The Royal Danish Ballet who, by their recent tour of America, showed the new world that the old world still has something to offer. The Anna Pavlova Commemoration Committee for their successful endeavour in making a worthy commemoration year tribute to the immortal ballerina. London's Festival Ballet for keeping the British flag flying at the Prince Rainier—Grace Kelly wedding in Monaco by their performances at the galas and for a triumphantly successful trans-world television performance of *Etudes*. The Stanislavsky Ballet from Moscow for its splendid production of *Le Lac des Cygnes* in Paris. BBC Television, and particularly to producer Margaret Dale, for a notable improvement in televised ballet. Those many members of the Covent Garden audience who have at last decided that the art of ballet is worthy of their making some effort with regard to dress and general tidiness.

No Honour at all to: Commercial television for continuing to ignore serious or artistic ballet presentation—occasional Sunday night fragments in a variety show are just not good enough. The critics of the Bolshoi Ballet in London who, in their reviews in the national Press, let their memories of the past prejudice their appreciation of the present. The Covent Garden Orchestra which has continued its policy of slapdash ballet performances and hampering the dancer, except when it played for the Bolshoi Ballet. All members of the Bolshoi Ballet who failed to turn up for appointments and parties when they had accepted invitations. Those who turned the black market sale of Bolshoi tickets into one of the most disgraceful rackets since the war. The Edinburgh Festival for still failing to provide a stage worthy of great ballet companies. Members of the Covent Garden audience who resort to partisan and unwarranted applause and booing (a good boo in the right place is fine; when not deserved it becomes idiotic).

Most improved dancers of the year: David Blair, Elaine Fifield, Desmond Doyle, Annette Page, Peter Clegg and Pirmin Trecu of the Sadler's Wells Ballet; Sara Neil, Margaret Hill, Donald MacLeary, Patricia Cox and Brenda Boulton of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet; Ann Horn, Noreen Sopwith, Patricia Dyer and Norman Dixon of Ballet Rambert; Belinda Wright, Flemming Flindt, Jeanette Minty and Jeffrey Kovel of London's Festival Ballet; Scott Douglas and Ruth Ann Koesun of American Ballet Theatre.

Need for improvement: The modern repertoire of Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. The repertoire of American Ballet Theatre. The general state of teaching in England. The musical sense of at least half the dancers appearing in Britain today. The attitude of artistic directors of British companies who pander to mass appeal rather than aiming at any kind of artistic advancement.

Designs we were glad to see: Nicholas Georgiadis' for *Noctambules*. André Levasseur's for the two costumes in *La Péri* and for the ballerinas in *Birthday Offering*, which proved that the tutus worn by ballerinas of the last century were more elegant than those of today. Dan Snyder's interesting modern approach to design in *Les Deux Errants*.

Designs we were not glad to see: Robert Medley's for the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet's *Coppélia*. Peter Rice's for the same company's *Giselle*.

Choreographers we admired: Frederick Ashton for his brilliant "pièce d'occasion"—*Birthday Offering*—which used all the Sadler's Wells ballerinas and made a simple and effective apotheosis for the Wells Silver Jubilee. Kenneth MacMillan for showing, in his *Noctambules* for Covent Garden, that, even with its faults, he can create a fine ballet for a big theatre. John Cranko for temporarily forsaking ballet to write and produce the intimate revue—*Cranks*—and for making a come-back with a major three-act work in the New Year—*The Prince of the Pagodas*. Wolfgang Brunner for a notable first attempt with *Les Deux Errants* for Festival Ballet. Leonid Lavrovsky for *Romeo and Juliet* and for his staging of *Giselle*. Antonio for the development of his choreography, as well as for the development of his company. Luisillo for bringing a new sense of drama to the Spanish dance.

A HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR: Michael Somes and Margot Fonteyn in the pas de deux *from* Birthday Offering, *which Frederick Ashton created specially for the Wells Silver Jubilee.*
Photo: Houston Rogers

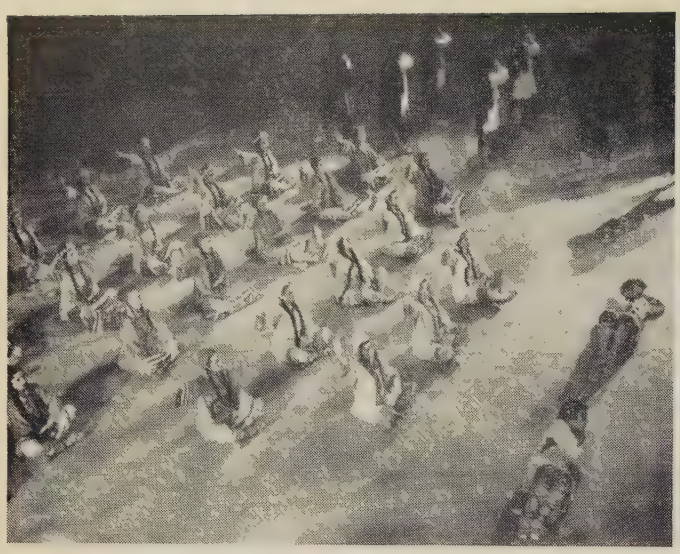
Mysteries of the Year: If the Bolshoi were scheduled to dance only four ballets in England, how did they happen to have masses of other costumes with them for their appearances at Croydon? How, with all Sol Hurok's organisation, was it possible that Dame Ninette de Valois's lecture in New York had to be cancelled for lack of support? Is Anton Dolin secretly married to Mrs. George Washington Stevens, to whom he was reported engaged 18 months ago? What has become of the London Archives of the Dance and Ballet Workshop? (These annual mysteries are becoming perennial). How much of the Covent Garden subsidy goes to opera and how much to ballet? Serge Lifar's retirement and reinstatement at the Paris Opéra, all within the space of a few days.

Performances of the Year: The Bolshoi Ballet in London. Roland Petit and Violette Verdy in *Le Loup*. John Kriza in *Billy the Kid*. Nora Kaye in character rôles. Lupe Serrano and Erik Bruhn in the *Don Quixote pas de deux*. Belinda Wright in *Coppélia*. Toni Lander in *Etudes*. Patricia Cox in *Pineapple Poll*. Miro Zolan as Dr. Coppélius. Margaret Hill in *Solitaire*. Svetlana Beriosova in *Giselle*. Alicia Markova in *Les Sylphides*. All the dancers who took part in the Pavlova midnight matinée. All the ballerinas in *Birthday Offering* (on the first two nights only). Violetta Elvin's farewell as Princess Aurora.

We do not want to see again: *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Offenbach in the Underworld*, given by Ballet Theatre. *The Entry of Madame Butterfly*, given by Margot Fonteyn. *Homage to the Queen*, given by a second-rate second cast.

Sorry you left: Violetta Elvin, who retired from the Sadler's Wells Ballet last summer. Gerda Karstens, who retired from the Royal Danish Ballet.

Come back again soon: The Bolshoi Ballet and Galina Ulanova. New York City Ballet. Martha Graham and any eminent American Modern Dance troupe. The Royal Danish Ballet. Mrinalini Sarabhai.



PRIMITIVE RITE: Members of the company of La Scala, Milan, in Le Sacre du Printemps *given in the open-air at the Nervi Festival. Photo: Piccagliani*

FAITHFUL REPRODUCTION: Another scene from the Massine-Stravinsky Le Sacre du Printemps *ballet given by La Scala, one of the few companies to keep this Diaghilev ballet in its repertoire. Photo: Clemmefoto*

A Festival for Genoa

by GIANNI CARANDENTE

SINCE the war, the festivals of Europe have become increasingly popular, and year by year their importance, as a means of bringing an international outlook to the arts and particularly to ballet, becomes more marked. From spring to autumn, most European countries can produce many festivals which attract the world's greatest companies, as well as large audiences from every part of the globe who can combine their holidays with cultural pursuits.

Italy, too, has more than its fair share of festivals and probably the most international in character is the Nervi Festival, given in the open air in a beautiful park a few miles along the Ligurian Riviera from Genoa.

Two years ago the Ente Manifestazioni Genovesi was set up. The aim of this organisation was to make Genoa a city of theatrical culture in addition to its fame as a centre of maritime industries.

But the idea of such a festival goes back to 1949 when Count Enrico Serra and Dr. A. Borelli, the director and the President of the Nervi Tourist Bureau, invited dance companies to appear in the natural green scenery of the Serra-Gropallo Park. First it was Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées, then four years later the ballet from the Nice Opéra and American Ballet Theatre. In addition there have been Shakespearean performances—*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Romeo and Juliet*—which included a certain amount of dancing.

In Venice also the Contemporary Music Festival organised by the Venice "Biennale" organised a series of spectacles devoted to the dance in 1950. But whereas Venice mainly dedicated its festival to the music of our time, Genoa decided in 1955 to confine its festival exclusively to ballet.

The first of these did not lack interest as it showed the company of the Marquis de Cuevas, the ballet of the National Theatre of Zagreb, the Japanese Azuma Kabuki company, and the John Butler Dance Theatre. Its greatest achievements, however, were the recitals given by Kreutzberg and the visit of Alicia Markova, who danced for the first time in Italy.

The second edition of this festival in 1956 was of less interest. The series of spectacles showed more the differing tendencies of various schools and styles but with not much regard to the cultural requirements of such a festival.

There were three ballet groups—the Royal Swedish Ballet, the Corps de Ballet of La Scala, Milan, and a recital by Kovach and Rabovsky, substituted at the last moment for a recital by Toumanova.

The Swedish company gave an accurate, if soul-less, rendering of *Le Lac des Cygnes*. Birgit Culberg's *Miss Julie* seemed to us to be most original, with its northern strangeness. Her *Medea* was intelligent and full of good invention, though to confront a Mediterranean people with a Scandinavian interpretation of Greek tragedy was rather like showing a Shakespeare drama to an English audience performed by Siamese actors.

The Teatro all Scala brought three ballets—*Aurora's Wedding*, *Gaieté Parisienne* and *Le Sacre du Printemps*—the main interest being in the latter work. This company is one of the few to keep the Stravinsky-Massine work in their repertoire and the version is a faithful reproduction of the ballet as given by the Diaghilev company. At Nervi the only important difference was that the Roerich scenery had been replaced by décor by Nicholas Benois, who adapted it for the open-air stage. The

ALFRESCO WEDDING: The company of the Teatro all Scala in the Tchaikovsky-Petipa Aurora's Wedding *at Nervi. Photo: Lido*

REHEARSAL FOR TRAGEDY: Members of the Royal Swedish Ballet rehearsing the Culberg version of Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet *at Nervi. Photo: Lido*

VERONA IN GENOA: Mariano Orlando, as Juliet, and Kenneth Petersen, as Romeo, with the Swedish Ballet in a performance of Romeo and Juliet. *Photo: Lido*

costumes followed the original designs, and I feel certain that had Massine been in the audience he would have been happy with their perfect execution.

The fugitive Hungarian dancers, Kovach and Rabovsky, met with frenzied applause from the public—and from me also. However, my appreciation was not without some reservations, as their extraordinary acrobatic virtuosity is sometimes outside the bounds of classical ballet.

I did not find the Hungarian Folk Dance company as interesting, and the Indian company of Ram Gopal evoked but lukewarm wonder.

The main interest of these first two editions of the Nervi Festival has been in single performances. There has been a certain lack of co-ordination, cultural foundation and critical integrity. The responsibility of organisation has now been entrusted to two talented and enthusiastic young men—Mario Porcili and Ugo Dell'Ara—with whom readers of DANCE AND DANCERS are already acquainted through their writings. They have the great merit of tenacity and the city of Genoa has kept faith with their enterprise. But this is not enough to bring any festival to the required level of dignity and culture. A certain discipline is necessary, and it is to be hoped that the management of the Nervi Festival will take steps to fill in the gaps that are always bound to occur in the early days of any enterprise of this kind.

Are They the Same at Home?

by EVAN SENIOR

continued from page 11

orchestra pit! Nobody did—but I am sure that only the dancers, and those who had memories of them in Moscow, knew how near such a catastrophe was at times.

A great deal of the setting for *Swan Lake* was, of course, newly designed since I saw it more than two years ago. But that had nothing to do, in the ballroom scene for example, with the much smaller numbers of dancers used: the Court, here, was in comparison like that of a German princeling as compared with the Bolshoi's approximation of a Versailles.

The greatest difference, in actual production, was in the final act. In Moscow, as I wrote on my return, this finale is a terrific experience, from the purely technical viewpoint of staging.

Storm and Waves

There, the ruined towers abutting on the lakeside are the scene for Rothbart's terrifying appearance as the Owl, standing high on the battlements grimly flapping the sombre wings. As the storm music wells up and the battle between Prince and Magician begins, so the waves on the lake begin to rise.

I do not know how the Bolshoi did it, but the effect was of enormous waves crashing against the shore and spilling over on to the stage, as lightning struck the towers and toppled them piecemeal into the foam below —here, one single tower, a painted "flat," simply slid downwards into some nether region, and however hard Covent Garden's technicians and the visiting Bolshoi mechanics might have tried to reproduce the watery storm, I hardly think that Covent Garden's resources could have encompassed it.

None of this, of course, could affect the quality of the dancing. But that quality itself, in its final impact on an audience, can be aided immeasurably by scenic grandeur, an aid to which the Bolshoi dancers are accustomed.

Coming to *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* and the beginning of this argument, I watched the opening act with a growing feeling of constriction. How, I wondered, would that mass of dancers I saw on the Bolshoi stage fit into this comparatively tiny space? Of course, they did not—only less than a half were used.

Blazing Beams

The stairway to the palace door was too short to allow for the effective leaps done in Moscow, the "glass" windows too small and too few to allow for the full effect of the fire behind them and for Moscow's tumble of blazing beams inside the palace. And probably the LCC's fire regulations forced us to make do with projected light and hissing steam pipes where the Bolshoi can—and does—use oil flame pouring from asbestos hoses.

Something of the great breadth of the Harem Scene can be gathered from the photograph on page 11, which I was able to take from the stalls of the Bolshoi Theatre. Although this seems to show the full width of the stage, it does not. The conductor's silhouette, as he stood in the centre, can be seen at the right of the picture, and naturally there is as much space towards the right of the picture, unseen here, as there is visible on the conductor's left.

The London setting followed the main outline, but a new one, smaller in size, was made for Covent Garden. How much narrower this was will be realised by comparing it with the photograph.

Much less depth was used here—there was only enough to allow for one exit through the grille on each side; as can be seen, the Bolshoi stage allows deeper setting and two exits. The Bolshoi width, too, is emphasised by the hung cloths—here we had room enough from side to side only for the central cloth with its darker pattern, not for the wider one that Moscow hangs above it.

The courtyard scene, too, was only about half the size of that of Moscow, even allowing for the masking-in by the false proscenium-arch used there, as it was here, but of larger size. The result was that we had to have a much smaller number of dancers for the Tartars, with less space for manoeuvre in a mass dance the effect of which is immeasurably heightened by more depth for the surging leaps forward and more width for deployment.

Off-Stage Drop

The background arch through which Zarema hurls herself to death was, at Covent Garden, far too small to give the effect of the chasm below into which the condemned wife falls. In Moscow, a larger back-arch could show perspective, in depth as well as in distance, depicting crags, with judiciously spaced tree-tops that indicated an off-stage drop.

All these matters, of course, have comparatively little to do with ballet as dancing, except that they enforce alterations here and there and so make the spectacle as a whole something less than the audiences at the Bolshoi enjoy regularly.

Nor are they any reflection on Covent Garden as a theatre or an opera house. It is just that Moscow is fortunate in having the Bolshoi, with its immense size and technical resources, as well as a company of dancers equally lucky to have such a setting. Each theatre mounts its own productions to the best of its ability.

But until circumstances allow British ballet-lovers to attend the Bolshoi Theatre as easily as they can now attend, for example, the Paris Opéra, we must all be satisfied with having seen only the half of the Bolshoi Ballet. And perhaps most of us are.

DIVERTISSEMENT IN CROYDON

continued from page 14

elegant A. Trushkin. The unholy rout of satyrs was led with dynamic fury by Farmanyants.

So ended these unexpected portions of Russian salad that had been served after the Covent Garden banquet. And we are left to ponder and reassess.

from DAVID HUNT

CONSIDERED as what it was—a concert of dancing—the Bolshoi's Croydon *divertissement* was in many ways just as thrilling and even more revealing than the company's full-length ballet performances at Covent Garden.

Just suppose, by way of analogy, that a hypothetical opera company, after having staggered us with performances of opera more magnificently sung than any within living memory, then carried its triumph a stage further by giving a concert of operatic excerpts and other vocal display pieces which showed that, far from having declined, the art of singing had been raised to new peaks of virtuosity. Would our music critics, who are less easily intimidated by technical proficiency than the general run of our ballet critics, then have looked down their noses and talked of "bad taste" and "circus tricks"?

With few exceptions, the choreography of the dances shown at the Davis Theatre took for granted a standard of technique that—apart from such things as Harlequin's original solo in *Carnaval* and other Nijinsky rôles—made the demands of the Fokine classics seem like child's-play.

Not an End in Itself

And yet the really astonishing thing is that the Soviet choreographer never seems to exploit virtuosity as an end in itself, but makes use of the most hair-raisingly difficult movements for their expressive possibilities as coherent links in an eloquent chain of movement. The dancers are such powerful technicians and so well schooled that nothing is ever forced and there is no affectation of any kind.

Thus, it was not the "acrobatics" of the *Moszkowski Waltz* that made one stamp and cheer until the dance was repeated, but the irresistible exuberance and heroic bravura with which it was performed by Struchkova and her strong husband Lapauri. Similarly, in the other dance that was encored, Messerer's *pas de deux, Spring Water*, arranged to an orchestration of Rachmaninov's song, *Spring Waters*, Vlasov flashes through the air in a double *saut de basque*, finished effortlessly on one knee, the movement not forming the climax of the dance but merely serving as a mercurial embellishment to the expansive lyrical flow of the choreographic design.

Messerer's choreography to the *Dance of the Blessed Spirits* from *Orpheus* showed, too, how the spectacular Soviet lifts can be used with poetic sensibility to provide a visual counterpart to the rapt serenity of Gluck's music. The ending was unforgettably magical, with Kondratieva borne aloft by Fadeychev at a single arm stretch, the two slowly advancing towards infinity.

Except for Lepishinska's performance in a film of an excerpt from *Don Quichotte*, the all-too-brief variation from Chabukiani's *Laurencia*, danced with razor-sharp, lightning attack by Timofeyeva, provided for me the most dazzling few moments of dance in my ballet-going experience. How odd it is that this exciting dancer with her otherwise flawless *fioritura* technique has still to perfect her *doubles ronds de jambes en l'air* and *fouettés*, as her Covent Garden Odette-Odile showed.

The company's other Swan Queen for the London season, Karelskaya, brought her splendour of line and aristocratic graciousness to the part of Aurora in a new and not very aristocratic choreographic version of the *Rose Adage* by Messerer. At both the Croydon performances I attended Karelskaya was falling forward on her supported turns, but a slow, superbly placed solo triple *pirouette en dedans* at the second of the three performances was ample compensation.

Exotic Mystery

In the dances from *Ivan Susanin* that opened the programme, given though they were with tremendous *élan* and panache, I am afraid that I had eyes only for Susanna Zvyagina. This wonderful artist is, incredibly, a near-contemporary of Ulanova, having graduated as long ago as 1929—what is the secret of these Russian dancers' eternal youthfulness? Has it something to do with the fact that artistry without technique is not approved of in Russia and that no dancer, no matter how famous, would ever think of abandoning the routine of an exacting daily class?

Zvyagina, an extremely gifted character ballerina, has that quality possessed by Violetta Elvin and, before the war, Lubov Tchernicheva—and, I am sure, Karsavina as well—of using her striking beauty to lend almost hypnotic dynamic nuance to the expressiveness of her movement.

Clad in filmy white, silver and black, was she, in Koren's *Georgian Dance*, a shy and aloof village maiden, who for a brief moment dances with a would-be swain, or some kind of mystical apparition—a Georgian peri, perhaps? Here was all the exotic mystery and magic one associates with the dancing of Mrinalini Sarabhai. Can it be that Georgia, at one time a meeting point for Byzantine and Far Eastern cultures, long ago proved Kipling wrong?

Koren's miniature masterpiece certainly had an evocative poignancy that for me was worth whole acts of *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*.

Ulanova's *Dying Swan* was fundamentally the same, but with some differences, as the version of Fokine's choreography we are most familiar with, but stripped bare of all the sentimental excrescences it has suffered over the years from being performed "in memory of Pavlova." As a child, I saw Pavlova dance *The Swan*, but like most people I remember the moving impact of her performance rather than her actual dancing. Ulanova, her face a tragic mask, her arms starting upwards as shafts of pain pierced her proud swan's body, here gave a performance as infinitely superior to that on the film she made of the dance some years ago as one knows, deep down, that of Pavlova must have been compared with her film.

Tours de Force

Farmanyants' *Taras Bulba* solo and Koren's *Spanish Dance* were omitted from the two performances I saw, but I was greatly impressed by the brio of Boris Khokhlov's dancing in Vainonen's rehash of the *Casse Noisette pas de deux*, and particularly by his execution of a figure consisting of a *sissonne, pas de bourrée, assemblé, double tour en l'air, double tour en l'air*, the whole repeated twice travelling downstage. When did we last see *two* consecutive *doubles tours en l'air* taken from, and finished, in a generous *plié* in fifth, and with such springy *ballon*?

Chistova, as the Sugar Plum Fairy, I thought had something of the crispness and dewy, apple-cheeked freshness of the best English dancers. A few sharp taps, possibly, with a magic wand, and she could quickly be changed into a Sadler's Wells senior soloist.

Though the audiences enjoyed it immensely, any blame for the *Walpurgisnacht* from *Faust* must be put on Gounod, 19th-century Parisian taste, and even, perhaps, on Goethe, Lavrovsky having produced the scene with absolute integrity. In any case, danced as it was, I would much rather watch this any day than a good two-thirds of the desperately dull psychopathic or *chi-chi* pretentiousness that so often passes for ballet in the Western world.

As for what has been ludicrously called the "broken line" of the Bolshoi's dancers, anyone who has ever watched Matilda Kchessinskaya demonstrating in class will know that the freedom and fluidity of present-day Soviet *port de bras* is no recent innovation but pre-dates the introduction into Russia, by Legnani, Cecchetti and others, of the cupped hands and rounded elbows of the Italian school, codified by Blasis, and later propagated in Western Europe by Cecchetti and his disciples.

Yes, despite their occasional banalities of production content, the Russians brought us more real dancing in a single month than we have had in years.

Now begins the winter of our discontent.

SO YOU WANT TO DANCE ?

continued from page 25

I have not seen another teacher who can demonstrate as well as she does. Naturally enough, demonstration has become one of her main instruments. She has such a positive horror of becoming too voluble in class, causing students to get cold (or never warm!) that she only provides "verbal pictures" when a pupil just cannot grasp a difficult movement. When class is over, however, she will go to endless trouble to explain and illustrate what the pupil could not understand.

I have never seen her give a dull class and even her *barre* exercises force one to use the body rhythmically. All classes are completely spontaneous, and although the order of exercises in the centre practice conforms to the orthodox pattern, each lesson finds them given in totally different *enchaînements*. The dancer must always, therefore, be mentally alert. "Blind following," says Anna Lendrum, "has never produced results in any field of art, and this is particularly true of dance."

The Legat system is so logically built up, that although a naturally healthy tiredness ensues at the end of each class, there is never a feeling of exhaustion. She illustrates this point with another of her favourite Legat quotations: "It is not energy expended, but energy invested."

While those who come to her for tuition are soon aware of the value of her teaching, she nevertheless feels that it would benefit all students if they would take a little time to think just what they hope to achieve in her classes, and how they can best take advantage of her tuition. She does not attempt to *make* pupils learn because, as she so soundly believes, they will gain permanent benefit from her only in proportion to the sensitivity, observation and receptive powers they use in class.

One of Anna Lendrum's main interests is choreography, an interest which she is ambitious to develop—although she is fully resigned to the fact that, with almost no opportunities, she may never be able to do so. She is not ambitious for position or power in a selfish way, but has a tremendous urge to pass on her experience to dancers who intend to go on the stage. Whenever possible she goes to the ballet, but she has no ballet "small-talk."

Classes at the Salle Erard, 18 Great Marlborough Street. Monday to Friday, 11 a.m.: general professional class. Tuesday, 6.30 p.m.: amateur adults only. Children's classes: Monday, 5.45 p.m.; Tuesday, 5.15 p.m.; Thursday, 5.45 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. and 11.15 a.m.

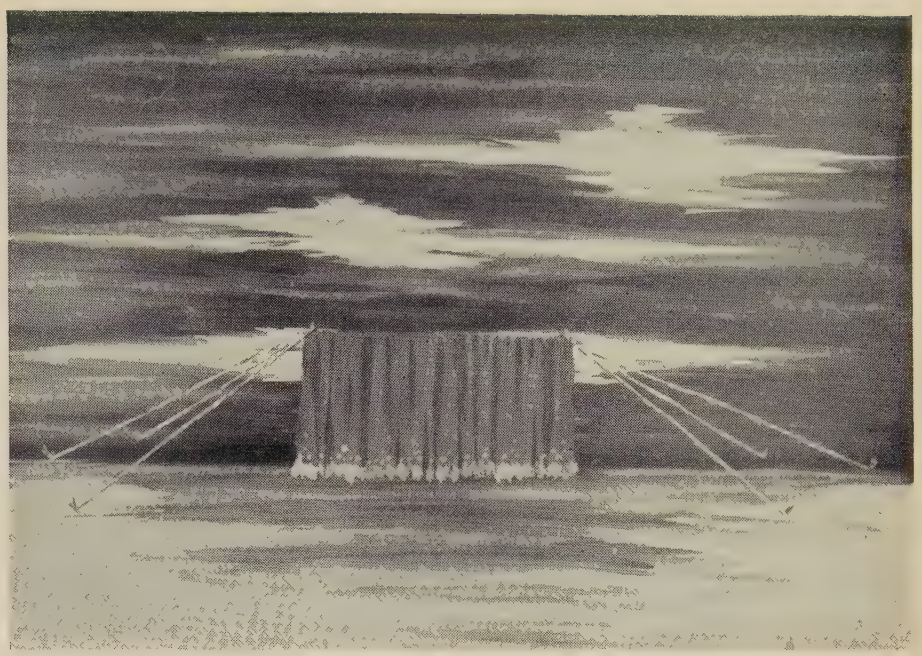
NEW BALLET

Entre Cour et Jardin

First given at the Théâtre de Monte-Carlo on November 19, 1956. Choreography by John Taras. Music by Richard Blareau. Designed by André Levasseur.

Cast

CLAIRE SOMBERT,
VERONIKA MLAKAR,
MARIE-CLAIRE CARRIE
MILORAD MISKOVITCH,
MILKO SPAREMBLEK,
VASSILI SULICH



CRIMSON TENT: André Levasseur's design showing the mysterious tent from which all the dancers emerge. The sky is in rather angry grey and black. *Photo: Oggero*

IN April last, Prince Rainier of Monaco married film star Grace Kelly. To mark the occasion a number of countries combined forces in several galas. After several months of honeymooning, the Prince returned with his bride to Monaco and the fact that this return also coincided with the Fête Nationale of the Principality of Monaco was adequate enough excuse for another gala.

During the intervening months a number of changes have taken place in the principality, one of them being the engagement of John Taras as resident choreographer and director of the dance. So far his work has been mainly confined to the cabaret in the Casino and Sporting Clubs, but with this gala it was possible for him to show again his very real talent as a creator of ballets.

Originally intended to be titled *Le Rideau Rouge*, the opening ballet's title was changed to *Entre Cour et Jardin*, owing to the delicate international situation at the time.

A little crimson tent is seen in the middle of what appears to be endless waste land. From it emerge six young people who, in divertissement form, express through the dance Love, Grace, Passion and Romanticism. There is no plot but, as is usual with these works, it might be possible to read some situation into the whole affair if you so wanted. Frankly, it seemed to be an admirable excuse for just dancing and when as well danced as was the case here there seems little point in bothering much about "plots."

The ballet and its score are quite unpretentious and Blareau's rather blaring music was adequate if not very exciting. Taras has done some very good choreography which gives each of the soloists a chance to show what they can do. I was very impressed by Sparemblek, who is a very strong dancer, and, in his variation—*La Virtuosité*—leaped with the agility of a Bolshoi dancer plus the elegant finish of a Diaghilev dancer. He has a sad-clown face, very like Jean-Louis Barrault, which, combined with his technical gifts, could well fit him for a great rôle in some suitable ballet somewhere, some time.

In a very complicated and dramatically conceived *pas de trois—La Passion*—he danced with Veronika Mlakar and Vassili Sulich; all three made it into an exciting visual experience.

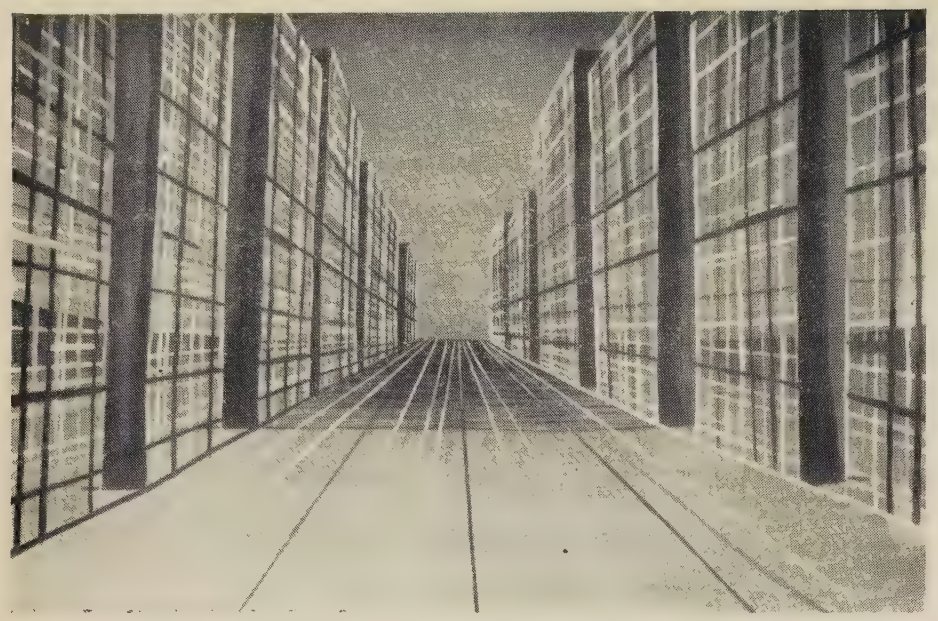
La Romantisme and *L'Amour* were *pas de deux* for Sombert and Miskovitch. The latter partnering excellently as usual, but it is a pity that Sombert, who is a fine dancer, tends to wear a rather disagreeable expression.

In *Le Scherzo*, Carrié spun like all get-out, and then some. At the moment her *port de bras* is very bad and her teacher should make every effort to put this right immediately. Small *scherzo* dancers like this are all too rare today.

Levasseur's simple and colourful costumes—red, blue, black, white and mustard yellow—had great *chic* and were a great improvement on his slightly similar costumes for Charnley's *Homage to the Princess*. This whole work makes a splendid opening ballet and it was encouraging to see six such satisfying dancers who mainly came from Miskovitch's group—Les Ballets 1956. **P.W.**

LA PASSION: *Milko Sparemblek, with Veronika Mlakar and Vassili Sulich on the ground, in the* pas de trois. *Photos: Lido*

LE ROMANTISME: *Claire Sombert and Milorad Miskovitch in the first of the* pas de deux *they dance together.*



STYLISED SKYSCRAPERS: André Levasseur's design for the permanent setting which is used throughout. Different wings and borders are dropped in to make the changes. Photo: Oggero

Suite New-Yorkaise

First given at the Théâtre de Monte-Carlo on November 19, 1955. Choreography by John Taras. Music by Avenir de Monfred. Designs by André Levasseur.

Cast
COLETTE MARCHAND
JENNY TREVELYAN
VASSILI SULICH
VERONIKA MLAKAR
Corps de ballet

A YOUNG man (Vassili Sulich) wandering aimlessly down a street sees a girl (Colette Marchand) whom he imagines to be his ideal. They meet again at a ball, when he is with a debutante partner (Jenny Trevelyan). He dreams of Colette in a *pas de deux*. After an interlude showing the seamier side of New York night life and where Veronika Mlakar queens it over a sleasy joint, the young couple meet again in Central Park, finally to join in a parade.

False Impression

THIS ballet was a lesson as to how stupid it is for a critic to attend rehearsals. On the night previous to the première, the *répétition générale* disclosed a work of the utmost banality to a score which sounded like poor man's George Gershwin and elaborate set and costume changes which did not work out at all—the waits between the short scenes seemed interminable. After nearly 24 hours of cutting and pulling together the work emerged at the première as a gay and pretty charade which bubbled like good champagne for around 35 minutes and with never a dull moment. It turned out to be admirably suited to a gala—a *pièce d'occasion* which would not become worn out by the time the occasion is forgotten, like some other such creations I can think of.

Elegance regained

Naturally one would like to see Taras working on something less frothy than this but if froth is demanded, then let it be good froth—and this was. Colette Marchand was gay and elegant as only a Parisian dancer can be and she had regained the quality which, in the past few years, has been rather lacking in her work. She was at her best in the *Promenade de Rêve pas de deux* in which she had some interesting lifts. As her partner, Sulich was strong and he has a very handsome stage appearance.

In her boa tassle-swinging number in the dive, Veronika Mlakar showed that she could parade about as effectively as more publicised musical comedy queens of the 'twenties. A dancer who was once with Rambert, Jenny Trevelyan, did some beautiful *jetés* in the ballroom scene and the *corps de ballet* made an adequate Greek chorus to all these revue sketches of New York life.

De Monfred's score, even with further acquaintance, seemed to be a rehash of American light composers and was full of insidious little tunes; but possibly that is what was intended, though a little wit would have been welcome.

Levasseur designed a permanent set of white, red, yellow and black slatted skyscrapers in brilliant false perspective, which made the stage take on immense depth. By dropping in wings and borders, the necessary changes were effected. Apart from Marchand's first entrance in slacks and a thick wool sweater, the costumes were bright, amusing and had great elegance. There is no doubt that Levasseur is one of the best designers for "occasions."

Most of the dancers, apart from the stars, were those used in the regular cabaret in Monte

AT THE BALL: Colette Marchand, centre, with Sulich on her left, in a moment during the ballroom scene. Photo: Lido

THE DREAM: Sulich and Marchand in the "Dream" pas de deux which is one of the best moments in the ballet. Photo: Lido

Carlo and although slightly lacking in maturity at the moment, there seems to be the foundation here for a company of more importance. In this century, Monte Carlo has played a very important rôle in ballet. The Diaghilev Ballet, the de Basil and Blum companies and also Lifar's post-war Nouveau Ballet de Monte Carlo have all used this enchanting resort as their headquarters where they could come and refresh their repertoires before embarking on further world tours. It would be good for France if her Mediterranean coast could be used again to further the creation of ballets. There are few people better qualified to head a company than John Taras. **P.W.**

FINALE (right): Marchand and Sulich lead the company in its rollicking closing moments. Photo: Lido

NEXT MONTH: Monte Carlo will feature again in the February number. The Editor is going there specially to report on American Ballet Theatre's season at the Thèâtre de Monte-Carlo. There will also be pictures and an account of the rehearsal stages of Kenneth MacMillan's new work for the American company, set to Britten's Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge and with designs by Nicholas Georgiadis.

Dance and Dancers At Home and Abroad

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET

CINDERELLA STORY

IT must have been very disheartening for the Sadler's Wells Ballet, after the disappointment of their cancelled visit to Moscow, merely to return to Covent Garden on November 21, to an audience which everyone knew would spend its time comparing the British company with the Bolshoi. The audience ran true to form and almost every second, during the intervals, it was possible to hear the name of the famous Muscovite company soaring above the general din.

As the scenery had not returned it was necessary to make up a season consisting of works which would have been left behind. The first offering was Ashton's version of Russian Prokofiev's *Cinderella*.

Really nobody need have worried, because as the ballet progressed on its rather cumbersome way it became apparent that it is almost impossible to compare the two schools, however much the lunatic fringe of the audience tried. Nevertheless the visit of the Russians started to show its influence in one or two places.

Margot Fonteyn in the title rôle looked as though she had been watching Ulanova quite closely. Her interpretation of the slattern, who goes to the ball and becomes a Princess, has broadened while retaining all its old subtlety. What a fine performance it is and how beautifully she reacts to all the moods and situations in the improbable story! For purity of line, her *pas de deux* with Michael Somes at the ball has few equals.

A new variation for the Fairy Godmother, danced by Julia Farron, has been added between two of the Seasons.

It was welcome in that it gave the rôle more importance. In the past this rather vital fairy has not had much to do.

The Ugly Sisters—Ashton and MacMillan—were as funny as ever and for home consumption it is probably better that they be kept as a pair of knock-about ladies. MacMillan appeared to have added some Soviet *jetés* to his dances. A very amusing touch this.

Alexander Grant made as spirited a jester as any we have seen in the past month though the Bolshoi have rather sickened us for these court clowns (they use them in almost every ballet it seemed).

Only in the work of the *corps* was it really possible to say that the Soviet dancers were missed. How I longed to see a high *arabesque* and a general loosening-up all round. **P.W.**

TELEVISION

PINEAPPLE POLL AND SWAN LAKE

Excerpts given on BBC Children's Television on November 8. Introduced by Peggy van Praagh. Produced by Naomi Capon.

ELAINE FIFIELD DAVID BLAIR

IT was a tribute to David Blair's elevation that each of his *doubles tours en l'air* took him almost off our screens, at least from the waist upwards, but certainly no tribute to Naomi Capon's production. The excerpts from *Pineapple Poll*—Poll's and Belaye's solos and the *pas de deux*—came over poorly. Little attempt was made to reproduce the décor; a lonely group of barrels supplied the nautical atmosphere. The studio stage was embarrassingly small, making it almost impossible for the dancers to perform full circles of *grandes jetés* or *petits tours*. In fact it made it very difficult indeed for the two dancers to live up to their reputations.

It was extremely hard to see the dancers some of the time. Poll's lightly coloured costume tended to disappear into a light background, while the atmosphere one normally anticipates for the *Black Swan pas de deux* never appeared at all because the ballroom was empty—this gave a rather cold, macabre effect. From what could be seen clearly, for the black *Swan Lake* costumes also tended to merge into a dark backcloth, the dancers danced very well indeed. The close-ups managed to catch the dancers in their most strained moments, while one of Fifield's *pointes*, as she did the *fouettés* (a good idea), misfired because it came too late, catching her unkindly in a rather untidy final pose.

The interludes of commentary given by Peggy van Praagh were too obviously a fill-in for the dancers' costume changes. It is such a rare event for television to have a well-informed narrator on ballet that it was doubly unfortunate that her remarks in this case had to be so hurried and sketchy. The way the cameras were directed could only be described as chaotic, and nothing was done to enhance the performances of the dancers.

Seeing that this was Children's Television, I invited three children to watch with me as an experiment. After three minutes they could no longer sit still; after five they were so bored that they left me the screen to myself. I wonder what gave Naomi Capon the idea that she could produce ballet on television?

FRANCE

THE PARIS OPERA

FOLLOWING a number of somewhat debatable decisions, the re-engagement of Alexandre Kalioujny will be received with general satisfaction. He will resume the leading rôle in Lifar's *Le Chevalier et la Damoiselle*, in which he will be cast opposite Liane Daydé, and he will also appear in Debussy's *Le Martyre de Saint-Sébastien* with Ludmilla Tcherina. Meanwhile he has made his return in the Polovtsian Dances from *Prince Igor* and in *Septuor*.

This last work has just been revived. Without being as consistently inspired as other ballets by Lifar, it is interesting for the opportunities it gives to certain members of the company. One can understand why the rôle created by the late Xavier Andréani has been given to a star such as Kalioujny, but it is not so easy to see why the shadowy figure formerly played by Claude Bessy and naturally appropriate for a *grand sujet*, has been given to Josette Amiel. Paulette Dynalix, Raoul Bari and Raymond Franchetti dance their original rôles. The new male interpreters include Descombey, Duflot, Duthoit, Parrès and Sarelli, the last giving a gentle interpretation as the poet. Duchesne does not make one forget Pierre Lacotte.

Madeleine Lafon has appeard, with Peter Van Dyk and Michel Renault, in one of her best rôles, that of *Etudes*, but the Sylphide

variation is no longer danced by her, but has been given to Josette Amiel.

On Friday November 16 the annual examinations were held in the customary fever-pitch atmosphere.

This year's jury consisted of M. Hirsch, Serge Lifar, Yvette Chauviré, Solange Schwarz, Christiane Vaussard and Madeleine Lafon. The variations—of technique rather than of interpretation—are usually different for each class, but this year the first and second quadrilles were given the "little dog" waltz from *Suite de danses* and *petits sujets* were given the flute variation from *Suite en Blanc*. This choice certainly made it easier to compare the dancers, but had the drawback of allowing the attention to stray.

Among the second quadrille, Mlle Lamballe's class, Mlles Pernel, Minnazoli and Vanco were outstanding, the first for her pretty footwork and her flow of movement, while the first quadrille, Mlle Guillot's class, revealed three interesting young dancers in Mlles Mons, Jouachim and Mallarte. The *coryphées* were less interesting, with the exception of Mlle Bassi. Mlle Lorcia's class of *petits sujets* was distinguished particularly by Mlles Garry and Poncet. The general quality of the *grands sujets*, pupils of Harald Lander, no longer requires stressing. Mlles Vauchelles and Serval deserve a special mention. But it was Claire Motte who easily dominated the proceedings by her musicality and her natural lyricism, which today stamps her as the greatest hope of the company. One may expect to see her flower into a ballerina.

Following the same formula, the afternoon was given over to the male dancers, who appeared in the warrior dance from *Entre deux rondes* and the variation from *Suite en blanc*. M. Roussel outclassed without difficulty his comrades of the second quadrille, M. Legrand's class, while M. Franck of the first quadrille was singled out for his fine *jetés*. Among the *coryphées*, pupils of M. Ritz, there stood out a really original personality in M. Labis, who is the most promising of the male *corps de ballet*. Once again the qualities of the *grands sujets*, pupils of Lander, need no proving when there are MM Duthoit, Mayer, Jodel, Duflot, Descombey among them. But new blood is needed to fill out the ranks which are rather thin.

PILAR LOPEZ

AFTER an absence of several years, Pilar Lopez has returned to Paris where she had left unforgettable memories. She did not disappoint. During the past year and more, Spanish companies without number of varying qualities have followed one another on the Paris stages with differing degrees of success. Despite the reduced numbers of her company, Pilar Lopez presented an excellent spectacle which enabled the great school of Spanish dancing to be sampled in its strictest purity. While Lola Flores, at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, recently offered a programme approaching the music hall, even if it was of Madrid, Pilar Lopez defends a more noble art at the former musical hall, the Théâtre de l'Etoile. It matters little that two pianos took the place of an orchestra, or that the company is small, or that the star has attained maturity as a woman. Time has changed nothing of the beauty of her style, which has long been deprived of impetuosity in favour of purity.

Pepita Jimenez, a tribute to La Argentinita, the company's founder, had been seen before. It at once placed the programme in a worthy atmosphere of elegance which never left it.

L'Amour Sorcier, however, apart from some excellent moments and a distinguished cast headed by Pilar Lopez (Candelas), Nana Lorca (Lucia), Antonio Gades (the Ghost), and Curro Rodrigues (Carmelo), has a few weak points, particularly in the Fire Dance, which Teresina interpreted more expressively. Among the other numbers were *Zapateado*, danced with unusual mastery by Antonio Gades and Curro Rodrigues, *Flamencos de la Trinite*, and *L'Espagnolade*, in which Dorita Ruiz and Antonio Gades humorously parody the so-called *divertissements à l'espagnole* danced by foreigners.

In a less comic vein, *Agua, Azucarillos y Aguardiente*, arranged by Argentinita, evokes the manners of old Madrid. *Madrid flamenco* closes the programme on a more serious note, giving each member of the company the opportunity to show his qualities, and particularly the singer, Paco Carmona.

Marie-Françoise Christout

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover, by Roy Round, is of Belinda Wright as Swanilda in London Festival Ballet's *Coppélia*, to be given during the company's London season at the Stoll Theatre on Saturday December 19.

BELINDA WRIGHT was born in Southport, Lancashire, and had her first dancing lessons there. At the age of 16 she joined Ballet Rambert and by the time the company went for its long Australian tour in 1947, she was dancing principal rôles. Returning to Europe two years later, she joined Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris and with that company went twice to America.

Returning to England in 1951, she joined Festival Ballet as a principal dancer and where, apart from a short period with the Grand Ballet de Marquis de Cuevas, she has remained ever since.

Wright has created a number of important rôles with Festival Ballet, notably the title rôle in Michael Charnley's *Alice in Wonderland*. Early in 1956 she created a rôle in *Les Deux Errants*, a notable first ballet by her husband, Wolfgang Brunner. Her outstanding achievement to date has been her Swanilda in Harald Lander's production of the Danish version of *Coppélia*.

Ballet Dates

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET
at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

Dec.
20 *Sylvia* (Grey, Chatfield)
21 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Fonteyn, Somes)
22 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Fonteyn, Somes)
26 (M) *The Sleeping Beauty* (Nerina, Rassine)
26 (E) *The Sleeping Beauty* (Grey, Chatfield)
29 (M) *The Sleeping Beauty* (Grey, Chatfield)
29 (E) *The Sleeping Beauty* (Nerina, Rassine)

Jan.
1 *Prince of the Pagodas* (Beriosova, Blair)
2 *Prince of the Pagodas* (Beriosova, Blair)
3 *Prince of the Pagodas* (Beriosova, Blair)
5 (M) *Prince of the Pagodas* (Linden, Blair)
7 *Coppélia* (Nerina, Blair)
9 *Prince of the Pagodas* (Beriosova, Blair)
12 (M) *Coppélia* (Jackson, Doyle)
15 *Prince of the Pagodas* (Beriosova, Blair)
17 *Coppélia* (Jackson, Doyle)
19 (M) *Prince of the Pagodas* (Linden, Hynd)
19 (E) *Prince of the Pagodas* (Beriosova, Blair)
21 *Prince of the Pagodas* (Linden, Hynd)
22 *Prince of the Pagodas* (Beriosova, Blair)
23 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Grey, Chatfield)
26 (M) *Coppélia* (Lane, Grant)

FESTIVAL BALLET
at the Stoll Theatre, London

Dec.
19, 20 *Coppélia*
21–29 *Swan Lake* Act II, *The Nutcracker*
31–Jan. 2 *Coppélia*

Jan.
3, 4 *The Nutcracker, Etudes*
5 (M) *Swan Lake* Act II, *The Nutcracker*
5, 7, 8 *The Nutcracker, Etudes*
9 (M) *Swan Lake* Act II, *The Nutcracker*
10–16 *Coppélia*
17, 18 *The Nutcracker, Etudes*
19 (M) *Swan Lake* Act II, *The Nutcracker*
19 (E) *The Nutcracker, Etudes*

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Feb.
4 Davis Theatre, Croydon
18 The Hippodrome, Golders Green
25 The Hippodrome, Brighton

Mar.
4 The New Theatre, Oxford
11 The Empire Theatre, Liverpool

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

Jan.
14 The Essoldo Theatre, Brighton
21 (2 weeks) Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford

Feb.
4 Arts Theatre, Cambridge
11 The Pavilion, Bournemouth
18 The Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton
25 The Gaumont Theatre, Southampton

Mar.
4 The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham
11 The Lyceum Theatre, Sheffield
18 The Theatre Royal, Norwich

BALLET RAMBERT

Nov.
26 (for 3 weeks) Scottish Arts Council Tour

Jan.
7 White Rock Pavilion, Hastings.
14 Theatre Royal, York
21 Television Dance Festival, Brussels
28 Her Majesty's Theatre, Carlisle

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at the Royal Festival Hall London
Dec. 24 for 3 weeks

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INSIDE THE PRINCE OF THE PAGODAS, pictures and opinions of JOHN CRANKO'S new ballet for Covent Garden. CREATING A BALLET, the story and rehearsal pictures from Monte Carlo of KENNETH MACMILLAN'S new work for American Ballet Theatre. ULANOVA IN LONDON, more reminiscences of the great Russian ballerina by NINA LATTA, Ulanova's interpreter in London. DANCING IN MUSICALS, pictures and opinion of the dancing in recent musicals from London and New York. JOSE GRECO, pictures and opinions of his season at Festival Hall. BALLET THEATRE IN MONTE CARLO, pictures specially taken by ROY ROUND. All the usual features and many topical ones.

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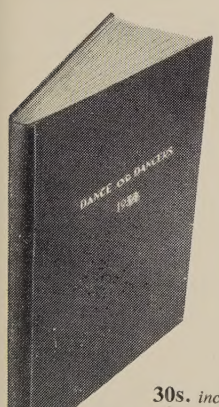

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JANUARY: **EARL ST. JOHN,** *Executive Producer at Pinewood Studios, writes on the planning of new films for* 1957, *and* **WILLIAM MACQUITTY,** *Producer of* ABOVE US THE WAVES, *tells how he picks his team.*

FEBRUARY: *Director* **BRIAN DESMOND HURST** *describes his way with actors and technicians.*

MARCH: *Screen-writer* **ROBIN ESTRIDGE,** *writes on Preparation of the Script.*

APRIL: *Director of Photography* **GEOFFREY UNSWORTH** *describes the work of the camera team.*

MAY: *Art Director* **CARMEN DILLON** *on designing for films.*

JUNE: *Musical Director* **PHILIP GREEN** *writes about the score.*

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